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TREATISE

UPON

FALCONRY.

IN TWO PARTS.

BY

JAMES COCKBURN BELANY.

"Though falconry is at present in a dormant state, it is too delightful a pastime to remain much longer neglected."

SPORTING MAGAZINE.

"——— he hails it as an auspicious omen of the revival of falconry, and does not despair but the time will come when it will be again the pride of a fine lady to carry about a noble falcon in preference to a lap-dog or a parrot.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

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PREFACE.

It was first intended by the author of the following pages to offer to the public only a few observations upon Falconry through the medium of some of our sporting journals; but the earnest solicitations of a few friends, anxious to have this noble pastime revived in this country, and wishful to obtain all the necessary information belonging to the art, induced him to alter his plan to the present form.

The first object of his pen was to lay before the reader a brief inquiry into the nature or merits of falconry, to examine into the cause of its decline in this country, and to ascertain how far it is fit or unfit, as a pastime, for the people of the present day. Since changing his purpose, his wish has been to present, in addition, a few notices of what appeared most interesting in the history of falconry—to give a slight outline of the character and habits of the different hawks principally used in British hawking, with the proper instructions for keeping, training, and flying the birds; also a glossary of the most useful terms employed in the art.

In addition to the above reasons, the author had other incentives to undertake this task, viz.:—Perceiving the intrinsic merits of falconry to be now generally misunderstood in this country, and that not more amongst the readers than amongst

most writers on the subject—a desire to, at least, rescue it from oblivion, and to preserve the essentials of the art from being utterly lost—and, lastly, finding what is to be met with concerning it, invariably treated of along with matter entirely foreign to it (Sir John Sebright's pamphlet excepted), and in no very commodious form for perusal.

Although, in compiling a work of this kind, it was necessary that the author should collect matter from most writings extant upon the subject, which in the present instance has been done, yet he begs it to be observed, that the contents of this volume are offered to the attention of the public rather from a practical knowledge of falconry than from one formed merely from the unintelligible gleanings or absurd theories of ancient or modern works. To Sir John Sebright's "*Observations upon Hawking*," and to Mr.

Blaine's "*Encyclopædia of Rural Sports*," two of the best modern works upon the subject, he, however, most respectfully acknowledges himself not a little indebted for services he has occasionally derived from them. Indeed, except for two or three particulars, the merits of these productions might have superseded the use of this treatise; but the former being by far too much abridged, and now scarcely to be found in print, and the latter not being to be obtained without purchasing matter upon other subjects along with it, consequently at an unnecessarily high price, might be considered grounds sufficient, independent of any other, for a publication of this kind.

As this, like most other works, is not expected to be perused by the more enlightened readers only, and as strange notions are not unpopularly entertained respecting the use or moral propriety of

sports and amusements, the author has considered that a few general remarks upon this point might be not injudiciously bestowed at the commencement of this volume.

Nor pampered lap-dog—horrid toy
For maiden sweetness to enjoy—
Shall man henceforth in sorrow see
Defile a matron's silken knee;
Nor tender wrist of damsel fair
Shall longer chat the parrot there;
Foreign usurper, rude of race,
Again to merlin must give place,—
Resign his ancient perch, and fly
With dastard wing before his eye.
For featly on the palfrey gay,
The ladye now is seen to stray,
Bedeck'd in sylvan green,
By brook and bower, by moor and dell,
Where whilom huntress lov'd to dwell,
With tiercelet proudly on her hand,
Held by a silken plaited band,
—A novel sight I ween.
And proud her palfrey paws the plain,
With radiant tail and flowing mane;
And as the sylvan form doth glide
By streamlet or by mountain side,
Her roseate cheek, with tempted eye,
The wild bee scarce forbears to try,
As o'er the flowers she trips.
So strong the force of beauty's power
Thus nursed by mead or rural bower,
So sweet her breath of nectar flows,
That e'en the bee forsakes the rose
To hang upon her lips.
It is, I trow, to modern knight
A novel but a gladsome sight,—
A hawk with hood and bells bedight,
Perch'd on a ladye's hand.
With her right arm her steed she reins,
Her left her faithful bird sustains;
And at each spring and at each bound,
The silver bell's melodious sound
Enchants like magic wand.
I love to hear the falcon bells,
For then I feel as magic spells
Had borne me to enchanted ground.
To lands afar where fairy dwells,
Where airy beings me surround.

PART FIRST.

CONTAINING

Observations upon the Nature, Antiquity, and History of Falconry.

FALCONRY.

CHAPTER I.

Recreations and amusements to the body and mind may be considered the next essentials to food and clothing, for the maintenance of human life and human happiness. A state of existence without which, cannot, in the language of nature, be termed *living*. Man, in all his positions of life, whether in a recluse or in a social state, has, from an original principle in his nature, an irresistible craving after gratifications of this kind, which are

as natural and indispensable to health and strength as his food. Deprived or disappointed of these, this importunate principle, like the stomach, assumes a ferocious appetite which must be gratified to a certain extent, else it will soon fret away or annihilate the whole. And, moreover, if not relieved from sources according to nature's imperial dictates, which doubtless must be the best and fittest guides to her own divine end, it will at once seek to quench its desire in the next fountain, whether wholesome or poisonous. Chambers, in his *Edinburgh Journal*, justly observes on this point, "How preposterous to suppose that this strange bundle of clamorous appetites and faculties is to be kept sweet by the mere administration of a certain amount of food, or even by the addition of a few luxuries." Sir John Herschell, too, says, on this subject, "The want of amusements is the impelling power in the vast majority of cases which urges men into vice and crime."

Viewing amusements, then, in this important light; considering their moral and physical influence upon mankind, their claims both to public and private attention appear undeniably great.

Although of late, our nation has been considered neither extra-liberal nor over-lucid in its ideas respecting amusements and recreations; yet, to its honour, and, I may add, to its interest too, it is now making fair advances towards both the revival and extension of them. Nor is a judicious choice and support of national pastimes to be judged an unimportant consideration in a state. On the contrary, it is one deserving of much more attention than it usually has credit for, in reference to both the health and prosperity of the people, and to the history of the age, in its relations to other times, because it is chiefly from the nature of the habits that the moral complexion and physical powers are formed, and because they are often deemed weighty examples and essential characteristics in the history of a nation.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were remarkable in the selecting and maintaining of their public diversions, which, with their laws, were held as imperial attributes, and, in times of peace, were not suffered to be either neglected or abused. In order that a nation may benefit from them, care must be taken that they are judiciously

chosen, and supported or suppressed according to their effects. The amusements considered most conducive to health and strength, are those which afford relaxation from toil, and agreeable exercise to the body and mind. Athletic exercises have been long and justly extolled for their advantages in this respect; but field or rural sports have ever stood the most pre-eminent. The former are inferior to the latter, inasmuch as they chiefly call forth the highest animal powers, or physical force, rather than yield general exercise; whilst the latter require less violent exertion, more moderate, yet active exercise, and lead their votaries more extensively abroad to embrace the invigorating air.

An essayist on English pastimes observes, "Rural recreations are not only the most pleasing and healthful, but the most rational of all our diversions. In the early days of Scriptural history, we find hunting practised and commended," &c. The *Spectator* also, speaking upon this point, remarks, "I shall prescribe the moderate use of this exercise to all my country friends, as the best kind of physic for mending a bad constitution, and pre-

serving a good one." Dryden likewise seems to have been well aware of the constitutional advantages of rural sports, when he says—

> "By chase our long-liv'd fathers earned their food,
> Toil strung their nerves, and purified the blood;
> But we, their sons, a pampered race of men,
> Are dwindled down to threescore years and ten;
> Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
> Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught,—
> The wise for cure on exercise depend."

But any commendation here of the sports of the field (their benefits to the body and mind being so well known), can only appear superfluous; nor is it an object of this essay to treat of rural pastimes in general; but rather of one in particular,—and that one is the ancient sport of hawking.

Perhaps there is little more remarkable in the history of the present times, or more likely to excite the regret and astonishment of succeeding generations, than the neglect and indifference with which the nobility and gentry of this country have latterly regarded this favourite pastime of their ancestors; a pastime which has existed for so many centuries, which has been faithfully preserved, and, with their birthright, transmitted

down from age to age for their enjoyment, and which must doubtless be a debt, they in their turn, owe to posterity. But this must appear the more singular still, not only from hawking being probably the most delightful of field pleasures, but also from its antiquity, especially when we reflect how high the *true English* genius (and this land is not yet *quite* destitute of it,) runs upon everything that is antique, upon everything that is stamped or fraught with the faintest remembrance of the "days that are now no more,"—when it has been considered with what fervour and antiquarian zeal each scrap or fragment that can be gathered from the wreck of past ages, is stored up as a sacred memorial of our brave ancestors, or mournful relic of the "good old times." For this strange inconsistency of the English taste, or for the decline of an enjoyment in these peaceful and palmy days, which through times of peace and war, maintained so high a popularity in this country, it must appear somewhat difficult to account. Like every other effect, however, this has had a cause, and the diviners of the "signs and wonders of the times," have given us, as usual, a variety to choose upon.

They are the following:—"The advancement of civilization effecting a refinement in the taste of modern sportsmen—the abolition of many of the cruel practices of the barbarous and sottish sportsmen of sottish days—the invention of gunpowder, by means of which the sportsman finds the fowling-piece a superior agent in the field to the hawk—the enclosing of lands—the scarcity of hawks now in Britain, and the difficulty of procuring them; but the last, differing widely from all the others, attributes the change to a degeneracy in the taste of modern sportsmen."

Some logician says, "truth, like pure gold tried in the furnace, loseth nothing of its weight, and every truth that carrieth not conviction, ought to be tested." Upon this axiom, then, I would deal with the alleged causes, for I strongly suspect that some of them carry more plausibility than truth. I shall not consider them, however, in order, but as circumstances render it most convenient.

First, then, in reply to the "invention of gunpowder," as having caused the abandonment of hawking. The invention of gunpowder, according to common opinion, was by Monk Schwartz,

about the year 1280; though there is some reason to believe it a discovery of an earlier day, and the first guns or cannons appear to have been used by Edward the Third in 1346, at the battle of Cressy. It would, however, appear, from the statements of Strutt, and others of credible authority, that in this country falconry was in its "zenith" in the middle of the seventeenth century; hence it would appear that falconry maintained its popularity more than three hundred years after the introduction of fire-arms. That its decline, however, is in part owing to the invention of gunpowder and of the gun, it is useless to deny, but whether this be the consequence of a *refinement* having taken place in the taste of modern sportsmen, or of any superiority in the instrument for sport is a question.

CHAPTER II.

It would appear from some statements in the preceding chapter, that falconry has been abolished with many other cruel practices of by-gone days, through a *refinement* in the *taste* of modern sportsmen; and likewise, that shooting has been adopted as being more suitable to the present state of society, and more effective in the field. But on the contrary, it is there also alleged, that falconry owes its decline to a very different cause, viz., a *deterioration* or *degeneracy* of taste. If, however, the preference of the gun to the hawk is to be taken either as a proof of its superiority, or an illustration of the "refinement in taste," an examination

of the nature or character of the two agents ought certainly to be made, which shall now be briefly done.

The gun is a grand and valuable invention, commanding wonderful power over distant objects, and the skilful use of it is no mean source of ambition. For certain purposes it stands unrivalled by every other object of human ingenuity. Valuable as it is, however, it is ever to be regarded as a dangerous agent in the hands of man, not only from its liability to accidental explosion, or the most fatal accidents, but also from its awful destruction to life. Whilst therefore, it is to be held invaluable for certain purposes; as an instrument of pleasure or amusement, its recommendations, especially to so free a use as is now generally made of it, are highly questionable. It is capable of great execution in the field, or of making terrible havoc amongst the lives of whatever it may be skilfully employed against, but it can never be used with too much discretion. Much game may be killed by it, it is true, but then the mere slaughtering of birds is not the object of a sportsman. It is doubtless, the agreeable and healthful recreation, which,

with all but poachers, is the primary consideration. But to take a practical glance at the gun in the sporting field.

When a covey of birds is put up, the sportsman directs his shot either to one bird in particular, or to a number at random. If the discharge has been successful in killing the object, less pain is probably inflicted upon it, by this means than by any other that could have been employed, to effect the same end; but if on the contrary, the game is only wounded, a lingering pain ending in death, with the loss of the bird, is the common consequence. Now this is an unalterable consequence of shooting, and instances of it will occur to a considerable amount with even the most steady and scrupulous of sportsmen. But when firing is made beyond a certain distance, or when two or three barrels are rashly discharged upon a covey rising close, which is too much the fashion of the day, the number wounded generally far exceeds the number killed; perhaps for every one bagged two or three flutter off, to pine away and perish. Now to take a similar glance at the hawk in the field.

When a covey of birds is put up to the hawk,

the hawk makes his stoop upon a single bird only. Whatever be the number in the covey raised, none but the individual bird at which the stoop is made, receives the least hurt from it; and then that bird is either struck to the ground, and if not dead, instantly killed by the falconer; or escapes unscathed. When a hawk misses its first aim, which rarely happens if in proper order, it either takes its quarry at a subsequent effort, or the quarry gets into cover with no other harm than a good fright. Thus much then for the cruelty of hawking, as compared with the use of the gun in the field. A slight view of the pleasure, or other advantages of each, shall next be taken.

The pleasures of the fowling-piece, are said by Mr. Scott, to be extremely enticing, which to every lover of shooting they no doubt are. Agreeable, however, as they may be to the fowler, they are to be enjoyed or partaken of by none but himself; spectators in general recoil with dread from the report. This is a truism which even sportsmen themselves are not insensible of, consequently shooting is unavoidably a selfish, or an unsociable

pastime; and one, the gratification of which, is to be embraced, only by a solitary few, out of the great body of the people. The pleasures of hawking, however few, or numerous, compared with those of shooting, are not confined to the falconer only, but may be enjoyed with equal satisfaction by a thousand of people at the same time, as conveniently as by a single individual, nay, if there is a person in the field whose enjoyment may seem less than another's, it is the falconer, whose time is least at liberty to dwell upon the delights of the sport. And, moreover, the pleasures of hawking may be enjoyed without paying half the price of bodily labour or physical exhaustion, which so frequently makes shooting a toil. Affording a most agreeable and healthful recreation to the body and mind, without involving the necessity of overstraining either, hawking may be enjoyed by the weak, as by the strong, by the lady as by the lord. This is an advantage which shooting does not possess. To follow the sport of the gun, with much of either pleasure or success, requires persons of a hardy frame and robust constitution, capable of undergoing great bodily fatigue, and encountering

drenchings of feet and clothes, without being liable to their evil results. Consequently the salutary effects of shooting are available only to those individuals whose health has least occasion to court their benefits.

But it is urged in favour of the gun that a "surer and wider range of warfare can be carried on against birds and beasts of all kinds with it, and that at a cheaper rate, than can be effected with the hawk." Under certain circumstances this may be true, but under others experience proves the contrary. When game is wild and unapproachable, as it generally becomes shortly after the commencement of the shooting season, a cast of hawks will often do more execution in the field than a dozen of guns. However shy birds may appear at the sight of a sportsman, the instant the hawk is put upon the wing, all shyness is at once changed into an extreme dread and aversion to move. Indeed rather than stir when the hawk is on the soar, they will not unfrequently suffer themselves to be trodden upon, and even taken by the hand. Under circumstances, then, of this kind, a couple of hawks, being allowed to

make six or seven flights each, which is the usual number in one day, and at each flight taking its bird, a dozen or upwards may, without much difficulty, be bagged, which to any reasonable person, must appear both a sufficient portion at one time for his table, and loss of life enough amongst his birds. But should more game be required, the number of hawks may be increased.

It must also be admitted that in many situations, where the game is not over wild, a more extensive "warfare," in a general way, may be carried on by the gun, and that too, perhaps, at a cheaper rate. But where sordid motives lead the fowler into the field—where every other consideration is sacrificed to gain, every enjoyment made subservient to an insatiable thirst for slaughter, which nothing less than the heads of all that come in the way seems in the least degree to appease, (which, alas! is suffered too much now-a-days to take the place of the generous spirit of the old sportsman); the killing of game cannot be defined sport, cannot be ranked as a recreation or amusement, nor is the person who pursues such a course deserving of the *name* of *sportsman*—

"As glory more than gain allures the brave—
* * * * * * *
So the ambition of the sportsman lies
More in the certain shot than bleeding prize,
While poachers mindful of the fatal hour,
Among the covey random slaughter pour;
And as their numbers press the crimson'd ground,
Regardless reck not of the secret wound,
Which borne away, the wretched victims lie,
'Mid silent shades to languish and to die.
O! let your breast such selfish views disclaim,
And scorn the triumph of a casual aim!
Disdain such rapine, of your skill be proud,
One object singling from the scattering crowd."

To look into some of the respectable journals of the present day, and run over a few of the sporting notices, or witness some of their "unequalled feats" in the field, is enough to make one shrink at the very thought of the state of sport now, in this country. A sportsman is seen in the field with half a dozen double guns, carried, and loaded as fast as he can discharge them, by a train of vassals behind him, pouring showers of shot on every side, and carrying wholesale massacre over hills and valleys, and leaving the country overstrewn with maimed and mangled game. Alas! is this sport? Instead of finding pleasure at such a scene, who that is not dead to the proper sympathies of our nature must not turn away from it

with horror? As an example, I shall, in *bona fide*, lay one or two of these "*battues*" before my reader.

In the ——— it is stated that C—— G—— has killed in three days, upon the estate of ——, with six guns, considerably above a thousand head of game, six hundred of which were pheasants; averaging two hundred pheasants, and near to a hundred and fifty of other game each day. In another column it is likewise noticed that M—— C—— bagged, between five o'clock a.m. and seven p.m., one hundred and twenty two brace and a half of grouse, and two hares, with three double guns and servants loading them. In three particular "points," that is, I suppose, three discharges of both barrels, he dropped seventeen birds. Now under such extensive death, such chance work, firing amidst almost clouds of birds (for such they must have been when a gun was bringing down at the rate of six at a discharge) where such a number were bagged, how many must have escaped to die from their wounds.

Could the ancestors of these gentlemen but raise their heads above the grave, and once witness such scenes of slaughter upon their inherit-

ance, or see English sport thus outraged, who astonished would they look? Yet how much more astonished would they be, (whose honourable pride, tempered with generosity towards the meanest animal, lay in sparing the lives of all beyond a moderate portion) nay, how would they blush to see the representatives of their ancient and honoured houses, making such acts of cruelty, objects of notorious ambition. But they certainly would look with greater astonishment still, when they were told after all this, that great "*refinement* had taken place in the *taste* of modern sportsmen;" and that their noble falcon whose glorious wings had delighted the world for so many centuries, had led them so often with "joyous hearts" over their broad lands, and which with their patrimony they so carefully studied to preserve, for the enjoyment of their offspring, was now denied a spot of ground to rest upon, except the gibbet, by their favoured progeny, and that through the "advancement of civilization."

One of the "enlightening" authors of the present day, very gravely asserts, that falconry has "retreated everywhere before the advancement of

civilization." He does not inform us upon what grounds he is led to make such an assertion, and I should hope there are few in this age who would venture to support such doctrine, when they are told that the cock-pit and the ring are in high fashion among the *beau monde* of the day; nay, supported even by some of the most wealthy of the land.

In returning to a comparison of the gun and the hawk, it need only be added, that where the taking of game is practised for profit only, or where the pleasure of the sport increases in a ratio with the destruction of life, or where unnecessary toil or overstraining fatigue, finds a reward in unnecessary death, the gun in general may be adjudged the superior. But where, besides a moderate portion of game, salutary exercise and agreeable recreation to the body and mind are sought; where a well earned escape of the quarry from its bold pursuer affords more pleasure than wanton slaughter, where the gentleman uses game only as an auxiliary dish at his table; and, next to having a few on his board, likes, in the good old

English taste, to see them sporting over his grounds, in the free enjoyment of life and liberty, the gun is not to be spoken of in comparison with the hawk.

As another not unimportant advantage which the hawk possesses over the gun, the game killed by it is perfectly free from all those disagreeable consequences of shooting, arising from shot being lodged in the body of the animals, the unpleasant effects of which are too often experienced at table.

Before dismissing this point, however, I beg it to be understood, that in making this inquiry into the nature of shooting, as it stood opposed to hawking, it was not through any intention on my part, to bring discredit upon the gun. It is true, I have pronounced it a dangerous instrument, as even in the most prudent hands undoubtedly it is, and expressed what I considered a just disapprobation of the cruel and outrageous purposes to which it is too often applied, but then, kind reader, be it remembered that that disapprobation was for the *abuse* not the *lawful use* of it. Used with discretion, and in the hands of a person pro-

perly qualified, it may afford much of both agreeable sport and healthful pleasure, yet that sport or pleasure, can never be proved so free of cruelty, or so refined in its nature, as that of hawking.

CHAPTER III.

Respecting the "enclosing of lands" as operating against the use of hawks. In open countries, with plenty of game, hawking can be carried to the highest state of perfection. But in situations of this kind, without covers, the game is always found comparatively scarce, plume and fur commonly resorting to trees, brakes, and cultivated places. This was found to be the case when hawking was in its glory. If the enclosing of lands be attended with disadvantages to this sport, these, upon a little consideration, will be found to be in a great measure counterbalanced by other benefits. If we have more fences to contend with

than our ancestors had, we have also fewer dangerous marshes, embarassing ditches (such as that in which Henry the Eighth nearly lost his life, when his vaulting-pole broke under his weight, in attempting to clear it,) and immense perplexing forests, which often screened the quarry, and as an old descanter hath it "thwartede the pleasance, likewise the faucons oft did lossen." And then, our common hedges or stone walls, independent of their generally having accessible gates, are perhaps more easily surmounted than these ditches must have been; nor do they require the cumbersome pole, which in former times had to be constantly carried about as a tax or mar upon the enjoyment. Moreover, then, these fences, besides serving frequently as covers for protecting and propagating game, do often, by affording a temporary shelter to the quarry, give additional diversion to the sport.

When a bird takes into cover, pursued by the hawk, the hawk immediately makes its point, keeps soaring for a short time over the spot, and on the sportsman hastening forward and driving out the quarry, a second and more keen and beautiful

stoop is commonly made. Thus a chase will sometimes be prolonged in a most interesting manner. But if, after a good flight, the stratagems of the bird in the cover should outdo the dexterity of the hawk in the air, an escape so well merited generally yields more delight to the sportsman than ever so many deaths. But the enclosure must be very small, and the flight short indeed, if the hawk, when in proper trim does not secure its bird before it gains the fence; so much for the enclosing of lands.

Next, in regard to the "difficulty of obtaining hawks." This may be overcome, if the proper means be used, without much of either trouble or expense. But what would tend greatly to remove the obstacle would be to put a check upon a sort of *modern mania*, which is daily discovering itself in every variety of form and character of destructiveness in this country, and which is constantly seeking to wage war with the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, because some have been charged and found guilty of the unnatural crime of living (despite all human interdictions) according to their own instinct—an offence for

these refined days beyond all toleration, and as a warning against all future depredations or acts of disobedience, and as a testimony of zeal in the grand cause of civilization, the luckless malefactors are to be seen gibbeted against walls and caricatured in public windows. The rabid victims of this prevalent mania are characterised not only by an unfeeling wanton cruelty, or covetous disposition, but often more particularly by an incorrigible desire for public notoriety.* Under the laudable plea of either "enlightening society" or ridding this land of "its burdens," these zealous labourers, in the fervour of their cause, appear to have discovered, that because a bird or beast cannot hold a plough, prune trees, or propel a machine, it is a nuisance to mankind, and has no right to either eat meat or live in this world, and because

* Although the world cannot too highly appreciate the researches of a Waterton, Bennet, Montague, Macgillivray, Selby, and other distinguished naturalists, for the services they have done to ornithology, it can scarcely reprehend too rigidly the cruel and destructive practices of a fry of spurious naturalists and bird-stuffers, that now swarm in every town and village, poaching our fields and robbing our woods of their most useful and ornamental inhabitants. Whilst the respectable philosopher or naturalist, satisfied with his specimen, delights in sharing the common privilege of life with the meanest animal around him, as "nature's creatures all divide her care;" these individuals either for ends of trade or emulous of fame in the craft of caricaturing nature, spare neither bird nor beast that comes in their way.

its flesh may be of no use to man, it assuredly behoves him to make the most of its skin.

The present prevailing practice of destroying so many of the beautiful birds of our island, either for the *abuse* of their skins, or because they do not appear to contribute to the avarice of man, which has exterminated many of the species, cannot be too much deprecated. In many foreign parts, where our boasted civilization, or artificial refinement has never yet taught a precept, the natives styled "barbarians," show far more sympathy and forbearance to the puny offences of the birds and beasts that inhabit and adorn their lands; fellow citizens, which they look upon as holding a privilege in common with themselves, bound by a sacred tie which the rudest nature shrinks from violating.

Many of our extensive land proprietors have lapsed, or suffered themselves to be drawn into the delusion, that if every bird from the humble sparrow up to the lordly eagle, could be destroyed in this country, our gardens would teem forth more luxuriant fruits, our fields more abundant harvests, and our moors and stubbles would be

more richly stocked with game; but this opinion is worse than erroneous. I could, at this moment, name several land owners, upon whose possessions not a bird is ever disturbed from one year's end to another, except game, and an occasional corby crow, (the most destructive, and perhaps unprofitable of all our British birds), who would challenge any landlord in the kingdom to produce a greater quantity of game, fruit, or harvest crops, upon the same extent of land. This proves sufficiently the absurdity of such an opinion. There is in the system of nature a peculiar law, by which, the powers or destructive habits of every family of the creation are constrained within certain limits, and by which, the overgrowth of any one is duly checked by another. From the eagle and lion, down to the humblest bird, or meanest beast or insect that crawls the earth, none are exempt from this imperative rule. The smaller insects are held in check by the larger, the larger insects by the smaller birds and beasts, these again, by the larger of their kind, &c. Thus the natural enmities between the different animals, where by instinct one preys upon another, a constant re-

straint is kept upon the increase and destructive powers of all.

Nothing can be more absurd, or more incompatible with the purposes of nature, than to imagine, by destroying the birds of the air, we would increase the fruits of the earth. Such, however, appears to be the mad doctrine of the day, and the slaughtering of an innocent and useful bird, is viewed as a step on advance towards the improvement of the nation, or the civilization of the people. *O tempora, O mores!*

Amongst the number of the feathered tribe, which have suffered most from this cruel and degenerate practice, is the peregrine falcon. No sooner is this bird known to have alighted upon our island, than, like a pack of blood-hounds, all the gamekeepers, or rather game-devourers, and other poachers, are instantly unkenneled to hunt it down, and nothing but the death of the bird, or the extermination of their game, is echoed over hill and dale, until they have glutted their appetites with its blood. That this bird occasionally preys upon game can never be denied: but it is also an unquestionable truth, that it feeds upon

other birds of a predacious nature, that are far more destructive to game, and obnoxious in other respects. But admitting that in fulfilling its destined end, it were to feed regularly upon game as its natural food, it may be asked, why should man, who is blest with so many choices, and with the most ample share of all, oppose the supreme decree, and envying it of its morsel of living, which is not his, take away a life that is probably less erring in the eyes of the Deity than his own?

How lamentable to reflect upon the present state of man!—to find the most rational of created beings, the most prone to outrage the sacred laws prescribed by nature. But in pursuing his reckless career, he should ever remember that the elements in which he lives and breathes are the divine gifts of heaven, to be lawfully shared and enjoyed by the creatures of Providence,—that there are laws of sympathy implanted in his breast, through which the meanest creature around him, the humblest animal submitted to his discretionary power, has a claim upon his humanity,—that it is religiously demanded of him, in fact, it is part of humanity, to respect the feelings and interests of

brutes. How the following sentiment of the bard is forgotten:—

> "No bird that haunts my valley free,
> To slaughter I condemn;
> Taught by the power that pities me,
> I learn to pity them."

But I would remind such poachers and game-keepers as traffic in birds and skins under false pretences, that there was formerly a high penalty incurred by taking either the life or eggs of this royal bird. The statute for the preservation of the birds of the chase has never been repealed, and may yet be executed against offenders.

The means to be used for obtaining hawks are either to get them young from the nest in this country or to have them brought over from Germany or Norway in a reclaimed state. In all large shipping towns where freights are constantly exchanging, a few birds may be procured at almost any season of the year, by either commissioning a German who follows the capturing and training of hawks as his profession, and who would land them in this country at an exceedingly moderate price, or by sending a person expressly

over for them. The nestlings are to be found in the breeding season in many of the mountainous parts and rocky coasts throughout Scotland, England, and Wales. Nests of course are scarce, because so many of the old birds are shot when hatching, for the paltry price of their skins or other sordid motives.

CHAPTER IV.

Having inquired into the merits of a few of the objections to hawking, as previously adduced, before entering upon the history of the sport, I would beg the attention of the indulgent reader to one or two more, viz., its being a "cruel practice of barbarous and sottish sportsmen." Now how far the nature of this sport, or the character of the sportsman, deserves the odium of these epithets, can be ascertained only by a practical or proper knowledge of both.

How hawking, which for centuries was so highly esteemed by the most refined classes of society, when the sport was in reality practised and known

by its judges, should have been so decried in times when it is neither known nor practised by one of its assailants, cannot but appear strange. Mr. Scott, in his "British Field Sports," says of hawking, "I have a heavy and forcible objection to it, which is, the cruelty with which it is invariably attended, in the trespasses on the feelings of those birds that are sacrificed in feeding and luring the hawk." His opinion of the cruelty of it, he remarks, has been formed from reading some old writings upon the sport. There is no doubt that in the days of old, as in modern times, individuals were found more given to cruelty than others, and that occasionally the falconer was not found an exception; but it is only those who choose to be cruel, and who are as ignorant of the sport as Mr. Scott, that attach cruelty to it. Every person that understands anything of luring a hawk, knows that the lure is made of iron, with feathers and meat attached to it, consequently, being harder than the hawk's beak, its "feelings" will suffer no very great shock from the sharpness of it. As to the training of the hawk, this may be done with as little cruelty as luring it, the lure,

or the stuffed skin of an animal being sufficient for this purpose. It is usual for the falconer to let his hawk have its first and second flight at a live quarry in a string, but then, as soon as the hawk overtakes it, it is instantly killed, and that without half the torture exercised in the killing of many other animals for our use. Before the invention of the hood, in order to blindfold the hawks, falconers had recourse to an operation termed *seeling* or *seeling*, which was performed by passing a needle and thread through the upper and under eyelid, by means of which, they were brought together and secured—the bird being thus, as occasion served, deprived of its sight; but this cruel practice has long been abolished. Whatever other cruelties may have been committed, they were all perfectly dispensible in the art of falconry, and are now entirely discarded from the sport. It has been said that the cruelty of falconry consists, in part, in confining the hawks to a domestic state; whose natural disposition is to fly at large; but the same may be said of even our most useful animals; the horse would prefer running at large to submitting to the yoke; the

dog whines to get at liberty; but when it is considered that the benefits of those animals to mankind are to be obtained only through the medium of such a course of confinement, and that they are kindly treated, and fully supplied with all the necessaries of life in this state; all sense of cruelty is at once removed.

It were difficult to determine whether Mr. Scott's taste for pastime or his sense of cruelty is most remarkable. Of the interesting and astonishing movements of the hawk towering above his master in the air, he says, "The sportsman had little need for recourse to the hawk for bringing down game, or desire to ride star-gazing about the country, and watching a bird hunt in the air." Any mystery, however, in this matter will be at once explained, by merely citing his sentiments upon what he terms a "Classical sport," namely, cock-fighting. "Cock-fighting," he observes "is pronounced horrible; weighed however, in the balance of *reason* and *fact*, it is attended with the least cruelty of *all our diversions*." He attempts to prove this as follows:—"The game cock is kept in a state of happiness and comfort until the day of

battle; he cannot then be forced, but in fighting is actuated by his natural instinct, which is in fact gratified; and if he fall by his adversary's weapon, he is the sooner out of the sense of pain." The refined "feelings" and taste of our author, are now as obvious as the cogency of his reasoning.

That the "old country gentleman," or sportsman, was remarkable as a sot, or for cruelty, is an assertion in total discordance with the true history of country life. The barbarous practices once so much in vogue, and now frequently attributed to the sportsman of by-gone days, such as cock-fighting, bear-baiting, &c., were never found to be, nor ever ranked amongst the habits of the true country sportsman; but were rather the favourite amusements of the vicious and dissipated profligate about towns, who had either the want of taste, or of opportunity for enjoying the more healthful and harmless diversions of the field. Queen Elizabeth hawked and hunted, and also frequented bear-baitings; but does it follow that all her court, and subjects throughout her dominions, must have done the same, must have

participated in such acts of cruelty and inhumanity as characterized the mind of that princess? If we of the present day, were to look back into the annals of the past, where a king has become a murderer, a courtier a regicide, a subject a traitor; where acts of treason, conspiracy, or infidelity have stigmatized an individual, a family or a party; ought we thence to infer that all courtiers and subjects in those times must have been equally wicked? Those who judge or censure the state of society at large, from reading a register of imperial crimes and intrigues, or the annals of a formal court and its wars, should ever remember that the history of a cabinet does not pourtray the character of a nation; that there is one of the court and another of the people; and that they can derive from this slender source but a very inadequate conception of the condition of social and private life; which ought doubtless to be one of the chief considerations of the historian.

Regarding the "sottishness and sottish days," of which, amongst other crimes, some of our modern refiners have so unblushingly accused our ancestors, I would ask, were there ever in any

period of our history, more outrageous crimes, more constitutional and family ruin, more abject poverty and wretchedness, more human degradation and dishonour, produced by drunkenness and dissipation, than are at the present day? Or was there ever so great a quantity of spirits and intoxicating drinks consumed in any one year of record, in proportion to the population, as has been in any a similar period of latter times? For an answer to these questions one need go no further than to some of our newspaper reports. And, moreover, drunkenness in former times, was not only of much rarer occurrence than now, but it was viewed with so much detestation and shame, that the drunkard was seldom permitted to enter or mingle in respectable society; and farther, intoxication in the country, where rural sports are practised, neither is, nor ever was, so common as in towns; and even when it does occur, it is generally amongst the lower orders of people, or such as have a greater love for the ale-house than for the pleasures of the field.

To form a judgment of the state of temperance or intemperance amongst our ancestors, in

general, we must not draw our conclusions from a few renowned debauchees, famous bottle braggarts, nor from the fabulous history of the Knights of the Round Table, which I fear is too often done. Such procedure would be an act of as great injustice done to their generous memory, as it were to judge or condemn all the people of this age, from the degradation and venality shewn at some of our election feasts. If there either was, or is to this day, a body of men, that has been considered more healthful, athletic, and courageous than another, it is that which has followed the sports of our country, and as drunkenness or sottishness is the bane of all such noble properties, this accusation, like several others, may well be regarded as false. Indeed, the requisites for the field will admit of no sottish qualities. You will as soon find a sot dozing in the pew of a church as following the animating chase. The healthful features of the country sportsman, with his vigorous and active frame, indicate the very reverse of sottishness. He eats heartily, drinks moderately, sleeps regularly, is fond of animals, and a hater of nothing but poachers. But it must also be

acknowledged, that to this slight sketch of the true sportsman as in most general rules, there may be found individual exceptions.

Washington Irving, that most delightful of authors, in his "Rural Life in England" in the "Sketch Book," truly observes "I do not know a finer race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterize the men of rank in most countries, they exhibit a union of elegance and strength, a robustness of frame and freshness of complexion, which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air, and pursuing so eagerly the *invigorating recreations* of the country. These hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits, with a manliness and simplicity of manners, which even the follies and dissipations of the town can not easily pervert, and can never entirely destroy."

But there is yet another important objection often advanced, not only against hawking, but against the whole of our national sports, which ought not to escape uncorrected; because it is frequently used to mislead the credulous, and spread

discontent amongst the ignorant. The propugners of this position, being of that turbulent and discontented sect whose creed it is to condemn whatsoever they do not understand, and rail against every good, or enjoyment of others, which it is not in their power to obtain, have frequently chosen the pleasures of the field and the turf as an eligible subject for their popular abuse, endeavouring to their utmost to bring the whole of our ancient sports into contempt. "Look," say they, "to the immense waste of money that is yearly spent in the keeping up of idle grooms, pampered menials and useless horses, when these idlers might be employed in the tilling of land, for the bread of mankind, and when the money" (if they had it in keeping) "could be laid out with such advantage to the community, in providing for the poor, and in promoting means for moral improvement" —the common plea, now, of too many public knaves and upstart impostors.

But, it may be answered, that we have more tillers of land than land to till—that is, we have more husbandmen, as well as men of almost every other calling, than can find employment—and that mo-

ney laid out upon the keeping up of the turf and the chase, affords bread to thousands of families throughout the kingdom, and carries the circulation of gold and business into rural and agricultural districts that otherwise would not take place; and capital distributed in this way, is doubtless as beneficial to the prosperity of a community, as if either placed in the stocks or sunk in consuming or wasted in airy speculations.

CHAPTER V.

FALCONRY derives its name from the Latin *falco*, falcon, or faucon, the name of the bird most esteemed in the sport.

The terms falconry and hawking are generally used and defined as synonymous, but they are, in the main, of very different import; the latter being expressive only of the *flying or hunting* of hawks in the field; whilst the former comprehends all that is connected with the art of *keeping, training, and managing* the birds.

ANTIQUITY OF FALCONRY.

Notwithstanding the variety of canonical and secular descanters that have from time to time expatiated upon this ancient sport, its origin remains to us involved in impenetrable obscurity. Having been held the chief pastime of almost every people known to us, historians, bards, bishops, abbots, abbesses, priests, and puritans, have lavished upon it so much of their divine and mundane light and darkness, that its origin cannot at this distance of time be traced or fixed with any degree of certainty. As usual, however, with these erudite miners into the bowels of the past, when the golden ore of truth lies too deep for their discovery, they have, out of a mutual accommodation to themselves and us, bountifully supplied this defect by a profusion of racy conjectures.

The middle ages have frequently had the honour of the invention ascribed to them; but it is also believed that hawking derives its origin from a much more ancient date. Pennant, speaking on this subject, says, "I cannot trace falconry in Britain to an earlier period than the reign of Ethel-

bert, who, in the year 760, wrote to Germany for a brace of falcons to catch cranes." It is his opinion, further, that it took its rise in Scythia, and passed thence into the north of Europe. Strutt and others appear to trace it in Britain to the fourth century; whilst others again argue that it must have been in use amongst the ancient Britons prior to the Roman conquest. Ethelbert, however, and Alfred the Great, are amongst the earliest of our kings, of whose passion for the sport we have any credible notice. Harold the Second, it appears, was also very partial to it, and after the Norman conquest, William the Conqueror is said to have greatly improved the art in Britain, and framed strict laws respecting it.

Tartary having been always celebrated for its birds of the chase, has frequently had the invention attributed to it; but Naples and Sicily in the time of Federick the First or Second, have also had it ascribed to them; whilst ancient Greece and Rome, have not been without their advocates for the same honour. In Rome, in the time of Constantine the Great, it is said to have been in much repute, and in the reign of Hadrian, Ælian notices

the practice of hawking. Pliny also notices it in Thrace, where he says, "men and hawks hunt together in a sort of society, the men spring the game out of the woods and thickets, and the hawks take them, after which they divide the spoil with the men." It appears that Martial was not unacquainted with the sport, for he terms the hawk "a fowler's servant."

Beckman, and some others, are of opinion that ancient Greece, the mother of so many arts and sciences, is not without her claim to a knowledge of this art. Nor is it at all improbable that the discovery of taking game by means of trained or tutored hawks was known to so ingenious a nation, where the nature and faculties of men and beasts were so closely studied. Aristotle in his *Hist. Anci.* almost sufficiently proves this, where he says, that "when the hawks seized a bird they dropped it amongst the hunters." Oppian, who wrote four books on hunting, called *Cynegeticon*, also mentions hawking as being an easy diversion. In Thrace, the early practice of this sport has been particularly noticed by several authors; and the pigmies in India, according to Ctesias of Cni-

dius, used ravens, hawks and eagles, to hunt the hare and fox, instead of dogs, as Blaine, in his excellent work upon rural sports shews.

Whoever may have been the inventors of hawking, it is beyond all doubt, of great antiquity. Indeed, it does not appear improbable, that the ancient Egyptians, long before the time of Homer, were acquainted with it; for we find that both this author and Hesiod, make allusions to the emblem of the hawk* on the vestibule of the temple of Isis and Osiris; where it is viewed not merely as an object of admiration, but as one of idolatrous worship. According to Porphyry, Iamblicus and others the Egyptians worshipped the hawk as an emblem of the sun, "from its soaring into the higher regions, and from its rapid flight." This is a proof that they were not unacquainted with the nature or habits of this bird; and therefore, it may be considered not at all unlikely that they, or their

* Antiquaries have generally considered this emblem of the hawk upon the temple of the Oracle, as a representation of the goshawk; but this is an error. The goshawk is a bird of *low flight*, and not one of the *soar*; and whatever generic characteristics may have been given to it by the Egyptian sculptor, they could never be meant to represent that bird, whose highest flight is seldom more than a few feet above the surface of the earth.

ingenious progeny, the Greeks, discovered the docile and useful properties of it, and so turned them into a practical channel for the taking of other birds.

CHAPTER VI.

To enter into an extensive history of falconry, tracing its origin, rise, and progress, down to its decline in this country, would be going beyond the object of this small volume; and as the majority of writings extant on the subject appear either to extol it with levity on the one hand, or to debase it through prejudice on the other, an elaborate detail could prove neither very satisfactory nor interesting.

There is no pastime on record which appears to have met with more general favour, or which has

been more universally practised than hawking. To find in what part of the globe this sport has not been in the most popular use, would probably be a task as difficult, as to prove all where it has been enjoyed. In oriental countries it has long maintained an undisputed sway over all other sports. Eagles and large hawks are there trained to hunt the stag, the wild boar, the antelope, the gazelle, &c. Mr. Johnston, in his Sketches of Indian Field Sports, observes, "that all the native gentlemen of India who were in the least degree fond of sporting, kept hawks of various kinds, and never travelled without them. The largest kind are trained to kill deer, by pitching on their heads, and picking out their eyes; they also kill large waterfowl, something like the heron—a sport of considerable amusement. Some of the hawks are very small, and only used for the lesser birds; others are trained to hover over ponds in which there are wild-fowl, which, on being fired at, rise immediately, when the hawks dart on them and oblige them again to drop into the water, by which the sportsmen get many shots, and kill a great number."

The Italian poet, Dante, appears to have been familiar with this kind of sport, if we may judge from the following simile :—

> "Thus dives the mallard underneath the flood,
> By the fleet falcon on the lake pursued,
> Baffled, the bird ascends, and seeks his lord."

In Tartary also hawking has long been held in the greatest repute. In the thirteenth century, the Khan in that country kept upwards of 200 hawks and eagles, some of which had been trained to catch wolves; and such were the boldness and power of these birds, that none, however large, could escape from their talons. The popularity of this sport appears to be equally great in China, where pure white hawks are used.

In Sir J. Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia" a very interesting account of hawking in that country is given, which I shall here take the liberty of inserting. The length of the quotation, I have no doubt, will be pardoned on account of the very interesting matter it contains, being in effect a spirited description of the sport as practiced in Persia. "The sportsmen," he observes, "proceed to

a long plain, or rather desert, near the sea-side; they have hawks and greyhounds; the hawks carried in the usual manner, on the hands of the sportsmen; the dogs led in a leash by a horseman, generally the same who carries the hawk. When an antelope is seen, they endeavour to get as near as possible; but the animal, the moment it observes them, goes off at a rate that seems swifter than the wind; the horsemen are instantly at full speed, having slipped the dogs. If it is a single deer, they at the same time let fly the hawks; but if a herd, they wait till the dogs have fixed on a particular antelope. The hawks, skimming along near the ground, soon reach the deer, at whose head they pounce in succession, and sometimes with a violence that knocks it over. At all events they confuse the animal so much, as to stop its speed in such a degree, that the dogs come up; and in an instant, men, horses, dogs, and hawks, surround the deer, against which their united efforts have been combined. The part of the chase that surprised me most was the extraordinary combination of the hawks and the dogs, which throughout seemed to look to each other for aid.

This, I was told, was the result of long and skilful training.

"The antelope is supposed to be the fleetest quadruped on earth, and the rapidity of the first burst of the chase I have described is astonishing. The run seldom exceeds three or four miles, and often is not half so much. A fawn is an easy victory, the doe often runs a good chase, and the buck is seldom taken. The Arabs are, indeed, afraid to fly their hawks at a buck, as these fine birds, in pouncing, at times impale themselves on its horns. The hawks used in this sport are of a species I have never seen in any other country.

"The novelty of these amusements interested me, and I was pleased in accompanying a party to a village about twenty miles from Abusheker, to see a species of hawking peculiar to the sandy plains of Persia, on which the hubara, a noble species of bustard, is found on almost bare plains, where it has no shelter but a small shrub called geetuck. When we went in quest of them, we were a party of about twenty, all well mounted. Two kinds of hawks are necessary for this sport; the first, the chirkh, (the same which is flown at

the antelope), attacks them on the ground, but will not follow them on the wing, for this reason, the bhyree, a hawk well known in India, is flown the moment the hubara rises."

"As we rode along in an extended line, the men who carried the cherkhs every now and then unhooded and held them up, that they might look over the plain. The first hubara we found afforded us a proof of the astonishing quickness of sight of one of the hawks. She fluttered to be loose, and the man who held her gave a whoop as he threw her off his hand, and then set off at full speed. We all did the same. At first we only saw our hawk skimming over the plain, but soon perceived, at the distance of more than a mile, the beautiful speckled hubara with his head erect and his wings out-spread running forward to meet his adversary. The cherkh made several unsuccessful pounces which were either evaded or repelled by the beak or wings of the hubara, which at last found an opportunity of rising, when a bhyree was instantly flown, and the whole party were again at full gallop. We had a flight of more than a mile when the hubara alighted and was killed by

another cherkh, who attacked him on the ground. This bird weighed ten pounds. We killed several others, but were not always successful having seen our hawks twice completely beaten during the two days we followed the fine sport.

"When at Shiraz," continues Sir John, "the elchee (ambassador) had received a present of a very fine shah-baz or royal falcon. Before going out, I had been amused at seeing the head-falconer, a man of great experience in his department, put upon this bird a pair of leathers, which he fitted to its thigh with as much care as if he had been the tailor of a fashionable horseman. I inquired the reason of so unusual a proceeding. 'You will learn that,' said the consequential master of the hawks, 'when you see our sport;' and I was convinced, at the period he predicted, of the old fellow's knowledge of his business.

"The first hare seized by the falcon was very strong, and the ground rough. While the bird kept the claws of one foot fastened in the back of its prey, the other was dragged along the ground till it had an opportunity to lay hold of a tuft of grass, by which it was enabled to stop the course

of the hare, whose efforts to escape I do think would have torn the hawk asunder if it had not been provided with the leathern defences which have been mentioned. The next time the falcon was flown gave us a proof of that extraordinary courage which its whole appearance, and particularly its eye, denoted. It had stooped and quite disabled the second hare by the first pounce, when two greyhounds, which had been slipped by mistake came up and endeavoured to seize it. They were, however, repulsed by the falcon, whose boldness and celerity in attacking the dogs, and securing its prey, excited our admiration and astonishment. We had some excellent sport also with smaller hawks at partridges. I was particularly pleased with one bird which kept hovering over our heads till the game was sprung, and then, descending like a shot, struck its prey to the ground."

In Asia, hawking has been no less a favourite amusement; also the Turks, Turkomans and Circassians, appeared to follow it with great ardour. It has long been of great esteem among the Americans; and in Russia, Prussia, and Poland, in Hun-

gary and Germany, together with France, Italy, Norway, and Denmark, it has been the standing pastime for many centuries. Denmark and Norway are particularly celebrated for their breed of hawks, and the natives of those countries equally so for their skill in the art of training them. Arabia is likewise much reputed for its different kinds of birds of the chase. It is here that the Persians obtain their best hawks for flying at the antelope, &c.; and the owners of them are as particular about their pedigree, as the gentlemen in this country are respecting the breed of their horses.

CHAPTER VII.

The exact date at which falconry commenced in Britain, being altogether unknown to us, nothing very satisfactory of its early history can be adduced. It appears, however, pretty certain, that our Saxon ancestors were well acquainted with this sport, and though, according to some authors, passionately fond of it, they did not make great progress in the art of training the birds. The Danes, after gaining possession of England, are said to have made many improvements in hawking, but it underwent more extensive improvement after the Norman conquest, William of Normandy having been a great lover of all field sports,

but of falconry in particular. Severe and arbitrary laws were enacted by this prince, for regulating sports, and protecting game, which continued to be rigidly enforced during the respective reigns of several of his successors. None but persons of rank were allowed to use or keep hawks; and it was not until the reign of king John that any mitigation of their severity appears to have taken place, when the chivalrous barons forced from their liege master the Magna Charta, and by consequence obtained grateful immunities from this oppressive power, by which "every freeman was privileged to have eyries of hawks, falcons and eagles, in his own woods, with heronries also."

Notwithstanding this concession, the laws relating to hawking continued extremely restrictive during several succeeding reigns. It was made felony to steal a hawk, in the reign of Edward the Third; to take its eggs, even in a person's own grounds, was punishable with imprisonment for a year and a day, besides subjecting the offender to a fine according to the king's pleasure. In later reigns, although the term of imprisonment was reduced to three months, the unfortunate culprit,

before being liberated, was forced to find security against a repetition of his offence for seven years or to lie in prison until he did so. The same monarch also issued an express mandate, for protecting owners of hawks against losing them, according to which, any person finding a "hawk, tiercelet, laner or lanceret, or any other species of hawk," was to carry it immediately to the sheriff of the county, who was to cause a proclamation to be made in all the principal towns of the county; the owner of the lost bird, if discovered, was to receive it back from the sheriff on payment of the cost incurred by its maintenance. Should the hawk found not be claimed within four months, it was to become the property of the finder, provided he was of proper rank, but if he was unqualified, then the hawk was to remain in keeping of the sheriff, who, however, was to remunerate the finder for his trouble. Should the finder of the hawk, instead of delivering it up to the authorities, attempt to secrete or appropriate it to his own use, he was held guilty of felony and punished accordingly.

Hawking appears to have been the favourite

pastime of kings, princes, and nobles, almost ever since the earliest era of our country's history, until about the middle of the seventeenth century. So high was the sport esteemed, and so greatly loved was the bird, that seldom either princes or nobles appeared at home or abroad, in courts or in camps, without their favourite hawk on the fist; and even kings themselves did not deem it beneath their dignity to undertake the training and feeding of the birds.

In peace and in war, the hawk seems to have been of equal request. When Edward the Third, according to Froissart, invaded France, he had with him thirty falconers on horseback, who had charge of his hawks, and every day he went either out a-hunting or up the rivers hawking. The hawk was then as much the travelling companion of the prince, the baron and the knight, as the pet dog has become in latter times. The society of the bird, however, although highly esteemed, was not the only reason for so carrying it about: besides being the most unequivocal sign of rank, it was of great request for capturing any bird the owner fancied, that should happen to spring up by the way.

Nor were the enjoyments of the hawk confined to the laity alone; the dignitaries of the Church, despite all canonical interdictions, were equally devoted to the sport. Nor were there to be found more implacable enemies to hawkstealers than the priesthood, who occasionally hurled their spiritual thunder from the altar against the heads of offenders. It is recorded that one of the Bishops of Edward the Third excommunicated certain persons for stealing a hawk that was sitting upon its perch in the cloisters of Bermondsey Abbey in Southwark. It was argued in support of this severity that to the guilt of theft was added that of sacrilege,—the bird having been purloined during the performance of divine service in the choir—but what was believed to have excited the ecclesiastic choler most, was the mere fact that the hawk was *his own*.

It is stated of Archbishop Becket that on an embassy to the French court, his worship could not set out without his hawks and falconers. Our old poet Chaucer and several others frequently satirized the clergy, on account of their rage for secular pastimes. In the Canterbury Tales a monk is

represented as being more learned in riding and hunting than divinity or Church history. As appears above, hawks, like dogs, were not unfrequently taken along with their masters to church; nor does this indecent practice appear to have passed uncensured by the bards of the times, who frequently complain of having their devotions broke in upon by their noise.

Whilst the barons and knights of old enjoyed this pastime with so much spirit, their ladies were not without their share of its pleasures. Strutt observes that "ladies not only accompanied the gentlemen in pursuit of this diversion, but often practised by themselves; and if we may credit another writer of the thirteenth century they even excelled the men in knowledge and exercise in the art of falconry." The learned prioress of Sopewell Nunnery, who wrote about the middle of the 15th century her "Book of St. Alban's," is perhaps a remarkable exemplification of this, but it will not hold good, taken in a general sense. Many ladies, however, it is certain, were well acquainted with the niceties of the art, and according to the fashion of the times, both extensively patronized and prac-

tised the sport. In old paintings, engravings, and emblems in embroidery, tapestry, or other kinds of needle-work, we frequently meet with striking representations of hawking parties, where ladies seem to hold an interesting and prominent place in the field; and in old writings, ladies have often been remarked as

> "Leading foremost in the field,
> With hawk on hand, on palfreys fleet."

Indeed with ladies of those days, it was so much an object of pride and ambition to appear at court, or out an airing with "merlin perched upon their milk-white hand," as essential in point of rank and fashion, as it is with those of the present day to wear any of the ensigns of distinction and fashion now in use. In the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" a lady is represented as having a hawk upon her hand, even whilst her spousal rites are being performed—

> "The lady by the altar stood,
> Of sable velvet her array,
> And on her head a crimson hood
> With pearls embroidered and entwined,
> Guarded with gold, with ermine lined;
> A merlin sat upon her wrist,
> Held by a leash of silken twist."

CHAPTER VIII.

From the days of William the Conqueror, down to the times of Charles the Second, a space of about six hundred years, falconry seems to have maintained a uniform and unabated interest in England; and although it was, doubtless, practised during several centuries prior to the accession of William, and also for many years (although not in so general a degree) subsequent to the reign of Charles, yet record does not afford any particular information respecting it. Its laws during that long period, and the art itself, underwent various changes and improvements by their respective sovereigns.

Henry the Eighth is particularly noted for his love of this sport. In the twenty-seventh year of his reign this monarch issued a proclamation reciting his great desire to preserve the partridges, pheasants, and herons, from his palace at Westminster to St. Giles's-in-the-fields, and thence to Islington, Hampstead, Highgate, and Hernsey Park; and that if any person should presume to kill any of these birds, he was to be imprisoned, and also to suffer such other punishment as to his serene highness should seem meet. It became a common practice in Henry's reign to have hawks and herons imported from other countries, which paid fixed duties on being landed.

Amongst the other notorieties of this famous prince, here is one connected with hawking, which almost every writer upon this subject, since his time, has thought proper to notice, and which I do not choose to appear remarkable by omitting. It was "on a time as his Majesty followed his hawk on foot, he attempted to leap over a ditch near Hitchin with a pole, when the pole broke, so that, if one Edmund Moody, a footman, had not leaped into the water and lifted up his head, which

was fast in the mud, he had been drowned." His majesty, however, still followed hawking with great enthusiasm until his corpulency completely deprived him of its pleasures.

In her turn his magnanimous daughter, Elizabeth, was not to be behind—not now immured in the Tower, no longer like a timid fawn, sheltering among the luxuriant boughs of Epping Forest, but wearing the "round and top" of sovereignty, in the second parliament, held after her accession to the throne, she passed the following enactment. "Whereas her majesty, as also divers noblemen and gentlemen, and other persons, of great domains and possessions, had breeding within their woods and grounds, divers eyries of hawks of sundry kinds, to their great pleasure and commodity, that if hereafter any person shall unlawfully take any hawks, or their eggs, out of the woods or grounds of any persons, and be thereof convicted at the sessions or assizes, on indictment, bill, or information, at the suit of the queen or of the party, he shall be imprisoned three months with other penalties." Hawking at pheasants and partridges was also restricted beyond a certain

time of the year, and no person was allowed to hawk in another's corn after it was cared, under pain of paying forty shillings, or being imprisoned for one month. This last clause seems no less reasonable than curious; for it appears singular that persons should have been in the habit of killing game during the hatching season.

In Scotland hawking was no less fashionable than in England; and the laws there appear equally strict respecting it. It is said that the beautiful and unfortunate Mary Stuart, was very fond of this diversion; and that while under the charge of Sir Ralph Saddler, he frequently gratified his illustrious prisoner with this recreation. Taylor, in his History of Scotland, noticing the sports and amusements of the ancient Scots, observes of falconry in this

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood"—

"The falconer of John of the Isles, appears bringing falcons to David the Second; and, from the enthusiasm with which the sport of hawking is described in the early romances, and the gravity

with which its mysteries are explained, we may conclude that in Scotland, as in the other countries of Europe, it was esteemed one of the most fascinating of feudal pastimes. It is easy, indeed, if we carry our mind back to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, to imagine how imposing and delightful must have been those field sports of our ancestors. Let us for a moment dwell on the picture. We see the sun rising upon a noble chase or park, in breezy slopes and gentle undulations, variegated with majestic oaks, and getting wilder and more rugged as you approach the mountains that surround it. His level rays are glancing on the windows of a baron's castle, and illuminating the massy grey walls till they look as if built of gold. By and by, symptoms of busy preparation are seen; horses are led into the court; knights, squires, grooms are booting and mounting, and talking of the coming sport; the huntsman and the falconer stand ready at the gate; and the ladies' palfreys led by their pages, are waiting for their fair mistresses. At last these gentle dames descend from their bower, and each assisted by her favourite knight, "lightly springs to selle;"

the aged baron himself, is gravely mounted, and leads the way, and the court of the castle rings with hoof and horn, as the brilliant and joyous cavalcade cross the draw-bridge and disperse themselves through the good greenwood. There are few who could resist a wish to join in the pastime."

In Ireland, also, this sport was equally popular, and eyries of hawks abounding in some of the mountainous parts of this country, it appears to have been enacted in 1481, "That whatsoever merchant shall carry any hawk out of Ireland, shall pay for every goshawk, 13s. 4d; for a tiercel, 6s. 8d.; for a falcon, 10s., and the poundage upon the same pain; and the person that bringeth any such hawk or hawks to the king, shall have a reasonable reward, or else the same hawk or hawks for his trouble."

Amongst the other laws or forms for protecting and regulating this sport, there is one which appears to have been very early framed, particularly noticed in the "Book of St. Alban's." It is a nice adaptation of the different kinds of hawks, to the different ranks and degrees of the people, and is as follows:—

The hawks belonging to an emperor—the eagle, vulture, and merloun.

Those due to a king—the gyr-falcon and the tiercel of the gyr-falcon.

Those to a prince—the falcon gentle and the tiercel gentle.

Those assigned to a duke—the falcon of the rock.

Those to an earl—the falcon peregrine.

Those to a baron—the bustard.

Those to a knight—the sucre and sucret.

Those to an esquire—the lanere and the lanerd.

Those for a lady—the merlyon.

Those for a young gentleman—the hobby.

Those for a priest—the sparrow hawk.

Those for a holy water clerk—the musket.

Those for a yeoman—the goshawk.

Those for a poor man—the tercel of the goshawk.

Those for a knave or servant—the kesterel.

The same curious book, like the majority of old writings on the subject, contains a variety of other rules and directions, which are almost as unintelligible as they are absurd, and which, tending rather to complicate than to simplify the art, are unworthy of notice.

Great value was always attached to birds of the chase: a single hawk was thought no mean present to be exchanged between kings; and it was considered a valuable pair of horses indeed, that was an equivalent for one of these birds when properly trained. It is recorded that in the reign of James the First, Sir Thomas Monson gave a thousand pounds for a cast of peregrine falcons. Indeed, at so high a rate were these birds estimated, especially the Norway breed, that they were thought bribes worthy of a king. King John received two Norwegian hawks from Geoffrey Fitzpierre for allowing one Walter Le Madena permission to export a hundred weight of cheese. Nicholas the Dane, too, agreed to give to the king a hawk every time he came to England, that he might have liberty to traffic throughout the king's dominions.

It appears that hawks were also made the tenures by which individuals held their estates from the crown. In the reign of Henry the Fourth, Sir John Stanley had a grant of the Isle of Man, to be held of the king, his heirs, and successors, by homage and the service of two falcons on the day of his or their coronation. Likewise,

one Philip de Hastings held the manor of Cambertoun in Cambridgeshire by the service of keeping the king's falcons. The Duke of St. Albans, who is Grand Falconer of England, receives to this day an yearly salary from the crown for keeping the royal hawks.

Hawks were likewise bequeathed as valuable and honourable legacies, the particular clause in the last will and testament being often followed by an injunction, that the legatee should behave kindly and dutifully "to the said birds."

The cost at which hawks were formerly kept is said to have been very great. Indeed, according to report, Lord Orford, who with great spirit kept up hawking till his death, about the close of the last century, spent the enormous sum of one hundred pounds *per annum* upon each bird, which, from the number of hawks he is said to have kept, must have amounted to thousands annually. But surely his lordship must have given his hawks gold for *rangle*, and bank notes for *castings*, like the famous heroine of old, who, considering her meals not costly enough for her dignity, dissolved pearls in her drinks, &c., or else the report is an exaggeration.

No one who knows anything of the keeping of hawks, can read such a report without feeling inclined either to expose the folly of incurring such unnecessary expense in procuring an enjoyment which may be possessed in the fullest degree at a rate comparatively trifling; or to exculpate the memory of an individual from the imputation of such unreasonable and useless extravagance, which seldom fails to bring upon it public censure. It has long been a conclusion amongst falconers, that hawks can have no better food than good beef; and I believe, with the exception of an occasional pigeon, fowl, or quarry, when out hawking, it has for centuries formed their common diet. Now, no peregrine falcon ought to have more than from three to four ounces of meat within the twenty-four hours; besides, on the day previous to that upon which it is intended to fly, seldom, if ever, half that quantity; yet this was the bird principally used by Lord Orford. By a slight computation of the current price of beef, and the quantity consumed at this rate, a tolerable estimate may be formed of the yearly expense for the maintenance of one of these birds. But although, from a calculation of this kind a fair idea may be drawn, in

a general way, as to the yearly cost, it must also be observed, that under certain circumstances, such as illness, or the mewing of hawks, a trifle additional upon their food must be allowed. But it must likewise be noticed, that in glancing at the outlay upon the bird, the return made by it must not be overlooked. A good hawk, trained to take game in general, if properly managed, will kill five or six birds for every one that it will eat; and one that will not do more than maintain itself during the shooting or hawking season is not worth keeping.

It is also said that Lord Orford, and many hawkers of old, used to keep a falconer for each hawk; if so, it was a very generous way of giving bread and employment to labouring men; but each hawk stood as much in need of a distinct falconer as each stag or fox-hound in a pack stands of a distinct huntsman. Two active falconers are just as capable of managing a good flight of hawks, either in the field or in the mews, as a huntsman and a whipper-in are of a pack of hounds. Indeed, where the owner himself takes an active interest in the training and flying of his hawks,

which used to be a source of pride to the prince and the baron of old, a single assistant in ordinary cases—that is, where a *few casts* are kept—will be found sufficient.

Amongst the falconers of note of modern days are to be found the Duke of St. Alban's, Lord Orford, Sir John Sebright, J. D. Downes, Esq., Col. Thornton, and Capt. Bonum.

CHAPTER IX.

FALCONRY, with the natural history of the birds used in it, was studied by our ancestors as a profound science. To be deficient in the knowledge and practical dexterities of this sport, was considered ignoble and unbecoming the rank of a gentleman: whilst an excellence in skill was held most honourable. The renowned Sir Tristram of Spencer appears proud and boastful of his parts in the science—

> "Ne is there hawk which mantleth on her perch,
> Whether high tow'ring or accousting low,
> But I the measure of her flight doe search,
> And all her food and all her diet know."

But although the nobility generally endeavoured

to make themselves masters of the art, as the fashions of the times required, I cannot agree with some who have most ungenerously and unsparingly censured them for an ignorance in every thing else. The state of society in those days was not so well suited as in latter times for the cultivation of general and learned sciences. Britain, ever since the Roman invasion, has been viewed as an enviable conquest by every foreign nation; and for the defence of their country and its rights, the art of war more imperatively demanded the study of our forefathers, whilst the finer arts were of necessity less attended to, and while the short cessations of arms invited to the more grateful amusements of rural sports.

In no nation more than in Britain has it been found that learning or philosophy ever flourished whilst the devastations and distractions of war prevailed. Peace is said to be the maker of inventions, plenty the nurse of the politer arts, but war is an enemy to both. The histories of Greece, Rome, Persia, &c., afford striking examples of this truth. The study of the sword, the spear, the battle-axe, and the bow, more than the pen and the pencil,

unhappily fell to the lot of our forefathers; and what country ever produced more skilful generals, more brave warriors, more sterling patriots or soldiers, who fought more valiantly in their country's cause, than Britain? Nor should it be forgotten that it is to their valour and patriotism alone we are indebted for those very blessings of peace, patrimonial rights, and national independence, which have so exalted and improved the nation; and whilst we are living in the full and tranquil enjoyment of their possessions, and the blessing of peace, for which they so nobly fought, and which they so dearly purchased, we ought to treat their memory with filial awe and gratitude, and instead of harrowing up from the tomb faults which were incidental to their times, and which lie enshrined amongst so many of the nobler qualities of our nature, throw a sacred veil over all their imperfections.

Every Briton of the present day, that is not degenerated below the dignity of his species, and at all acquainted with the history of his country or of himself, can need no more than a moment's reflection to kindle in his breast the strongest emo-

tions of duty and gratitude for the unrequitable debt we owe to our ancestors. Akenside says,—

> "Pass not on till thou hast blessed their memory;
> ——————— and if thy home
> Salute thee with a father's honoured name,
> Go call thy sons, instruct them what a debt
> They owe their ancestors."

And so Southey,—

> "For whilst I understand and feel
> How much to them I owe,
> My cheeks have often been bedewed
> With tears of thoughtful gratitude."

Innumerable citations might be given from the best of modern writings illustrative of this great debt, and of the veneration and respect due to their memory, but the limits of this digression must exclude their notice. They were not, however, without their imperfections, any more than the people of the present day; but the errors of those "dark days" were certainly less inexcusable than those committed in our more "enlightened and refined times;" and those faults, however unjustifiable in themselves, were fully counterbalanced by nobler virtues.

Nothing can appear more unjust, or more revolting to the feelings of humanity, than those wanton attacks and unmerited reproaches so indiscriminately levelled against the honour and fame of our forefathers, designed to strip them of every excellence, rob them of every virtue, and degrade them beneath the brute creation. A writer—one of those *pro* and *con* candidates for public notoriety—observes, that "as to our brutish and uncultivated ancestors, whom every civilized Christian must blush to own, with their rude manners and tyrannical customs, we of the present day have advanced too far into the regions of intellectual light and refinement not to disregard and treat with deserved contempt, either them or their absurd and arbitrary forms and institutions." Another writer, in congratulating his readers upon their happy escape from times of "brutality and ignorance," rejoices that they live in "more safe, honourable, and polished days."

That we live in more peaceful times, and where person or property, in a general way, is more secure from our enemies, or where learning and science are more universal, can be neither denied nor too

highly prized. But to whom are we indebted for these benefits? By whom was the foundation of that defence or bulwark of our national safety and national glory laid? By whom was the yoke of foreign bondage or the impending chain of national slavery averted, but by the arms and wisdom of our ancestors?

But whilst it is acknowledged that learning and arts are now more generally studied, it can never be admitted that this age, with all its advantages and boasted enlightenment, has produced men of such distinguished excellence or transcendent genius as ages gone past. The immortal testimonies they have left behind them leave us not a shade of doubt upon this great truth. Instead of surpassing them in either literature or science, their productions are placed before us as the most perfect models for our imitation, and acknowledged standards by which we judge of our own proficiency.

That our forefathers were less polished or refined in their manners will hardly be denied; but that they were less honourable, can never be proved. The principles upon which business was transacted in those times testify the very contrary. With

them a man's word was more regarded, and held more credible and binding, than an oath or a pledge upon black and white now-a-days. Were evidence here required to prove this sad truth, this melancholy moral degeneracy of our species, innumerable instances might be adduced. In a recent number of that admirable journal the Britannia, on noticing Sir H. Nicholas's Orders of Knighthood, we find an elegant passage upon this point, which, from its truth, and occurring rather opportunely, I shall here take the liberty of inserting:—

"The reflection is forced on the mind as we read the names of the gallant knights who, at different periods, were enrolled as members of the order, and reflect on their mighty achievements, their feats in battle, chivalrous defence of the oppressed, their rigid observance of their oaths to seek out and redress the wrongs of 'ladies helpless and forlorn,' and deserted orphans, of how long the forms of institutions may survive when their spirit is extinct. The Garter is still the most honourable distinction of the sovereign, and is now as eagerly coveted as in the days of old; but where are the

feelings to which it owed its origin, and the sentiments and actions which lent to it lustre? As mouldered and neglected as the bodies of its founders."

If a man in former times was less polished in his manner, he was more sterling in his heart; if less ceremonious and formal, he was more sincere in his friendship; if less flattering in his address, he was more generous and hospitable in his life. Indeed, to prove this, one need go no farther for testimony than to one of those families who still remain the "true representatives of an illustrious line," and the genuine representatives also of the generous and hospitable manners of what is termed the old school.

There is scarcely anything seems more striking to the person who studies the character and manners of mankind, than the remarkable difference between individuals or families (whatever their rank may be) of what are commonly called the old and new schools. This disparity is observable under all circumstances—under the greatest reverses of fortune, the closest approximation of habits, &c., and may be traced even in the most promiscuous amalgamations of society. Those of

the old school are generally distinguished by a concentration of the more dignified qualities of our nature, such as loyalty, patriotism, philanthropy, and benevolence, with a peculiar regard for old friends, old servants, and old generous customs; whilst those of the new are commonly conspicuous only by a palpable *imitation* of some of those virtues which, however closely studied or deftly dissembled, is always equivocal. The appearance of a man of the former has always the bearing of conviction—that of the latter always dubiety; the former, rather than degrade the dignity of manhood, will submit to be considered unfashionable or unpolite; the latter, rather than be thought deficient of these qualities, will condescend to become the fop, the fool, or the slave of servility. The friendship of the one is a permanent treasure to society, scorning the look of interest; that of the other a system of hollow formalities, a mercenary speculation couched under a fallacious ingenuousness, veering with the winds and fluctuating with the tides, a flattering siren, a preying harpy, that is lured by prosperity and scared by adversity. But having trespassed too far, I shall now conclude

this digression by subjoining a few lines from the "Mill" of Pinder Cockloft, Esq., a member of the Old School:—

'Twas joy we looked for in my prime,
That idol of the olden time;
When all our pastimes had the art
To please, and not mislead, the heart.
Style cursed us not, that modern flash,
That love of racket and of trash;
Which scares at once all feeling joys,
And drowns delight in empty noise;
Which barters friendship, mirth, and truth,
The artless air, the bloom of youth,
And all those gentle sweets that swarm
Round nature in her simplest form,
For cold display, for hollow state,
The trapping of the would-be great.
Oh! once again those days recall,
When heart met heart in honoured hall;
When every honest guest would flock
To add his pleasure to the stock;
More fond his transports to express
Than shew the tinsel of his dress!
These were the times that clasped the soul
In gentle friendship's soft control.

CHAPTER X.

FALCONRY is an art, or species of sport, of an astonishing invention. It may be wondered that man, in contemplating the feathered creation around him, seeing each family with its own peculiar affections and affinities, following its own instincts, obeying its own laws, and performing its own part with such fidelity and exactness in the airy drama,—where each piece and each scene, with all their apparent discrepancies, so beautifully harmonize with one another in working out the grand end,—should have conceived the idea, not only of breaking in upon this harmony of nature by seeking to possess such of the "fowls of the

air" as are "appointed for the use of man," but finding himself incapable of overtaking them in their flight, or of obtaining them without the aid of some instrument of art, should have ever hoped to find that agent amongst the wildest of the winged tribe; that the eagle or the falcon, whose home may be said to be the clouds, the desert, or the loftiest mountains, whose eye, in its natural element can scarcely be brought to endure the sight of a human form, and whose nature—the most fierce and courageous, unknown to restraint, unmoulded to controul—should be thus overcome by art, so diverted from its original self or habits, and so transformed into a mode of such obedience as to become the most docile and useful of all the feathered race!

In reading the opinions of different writers upon falconry, it is very difficult for the stranger to form a just or satisfactory idea of the real merits or nature of it, however ardent his wishes might be either to know or to revive the sport. It would appear by some, as has already been noticed, both a barbarous and most expensive practice; by others a most harmless, profitable, and delightful one.

The Abbe Le Plunche, in his description, styles it "one of the noblest and most profitable of pleasures." But although experience has taught me to differ with those who consider it a very expensive pastime, I cannot altogether agree with the Abbé in pronouncing it one of great profit, taking the term in its popular sense. It may be considered profitable, inasmuch as its enjoyment may contribute to health, and afford a more lasting and pleasurable amusement, at a small expense, than can be derived from either hounds, race-horses or other less wholesome sources, at a much more expensive rate; but it is hardly to be recommended to the gainful speculator as an occupation fraught with much pecuniary advantage. Nor is the monastic divine over sound in his doctrine when he tells us that the hawk "launches upon its prey and bears it to its master." He and some others who have more recently attempted to describe this sport in the same erroneous manner, seem not only ignorant of the practical part, but of the very principle of hawking. Nothing is more contrary to the nature, or more inconsistent with the disposition of the hawk, than to carry its prey to its

master, or even voluntarily to yield it up to him.

Falconry possesses many amusing attractions which are not to be met with in any other of our rural sports. Its pleasures are not confined to the field alone, as most others are, but they may be found with almost equal satisfaction even in the mews. The gentleman who keeps hawks, can never be at a loss for a source of agreeable and innocent amusement to pass away a dull or leisure hour. He has only to step into the mews, or to the green plot, where, by day, they are commonly kept, and there the sweet and harmonious tinkle of the bells, the lofty and intelligent looks, the bold and stately bearing of the noble falcon, can never fail to excite pleasure and admiration. Nor can any person whose mind rises above self-contemplation, or the grovelling interests of this world, look upon this bird, which so long had been a delight, and graced the ancient halls of our forefathers, without experiencing many endearing associations of the past, and without viewing it now as a sort of neglected and melancholy relic of a more glorious day.

To see the hawks feed is a most interesting sight, and one that seldom fails to command the attention of even the rudest minds—the beautiful symmetry and graceful attitudes of the birds are then extremely attracting. The tutoring of them is likewise a most delightful recreation, and one in which both princes and nobles, in former times, took great pleasure; considering it neither too mean nor too toilsome for their own undertaking—to watch the progress of the pupil gradually yielding obedience to the rules of the teacher—to mark the bland subtilities of art stealing imperceptibly between the bird and its own nature, until they gain a sure possession, then weaning it away, step by step, from its native wildness into a tame and sociable state—is a most interesting study.

The society, too, of the hawks, by every lover of this ancient sport, has always been regarded with peculiar interest; nor is this to be wondered at, when once the noble nature of these birds has been experienced. Our ancestors took great pride in having them placed, especially on "high times," or days of festivity, upon their blocks on the smooth sward in front of their halls, or on each side of their door,

that they might be seen by their guests, or admired through the windows.. This was a true old English fashion, and must have had a beautiful appearance placed in front of some of their stately buildings. Living at hack, their society is still more amusing: their lively appearance soaring around the house, perching about the doors or windows, following their master over his grounds, now skimming over his head, now alighting upon his fist, &c., render them extremely pleasing. It has already been observed, that in former times they were often made the travelling companions of both ladies and gentlemen, and as such they became both faithful and affectionate ones. By the way, Sir John Sebright does not seem to allow hawks any claim to such a quality as affection or attachment to their keeper. This is a most erroneous notion, and appears the more singular emanating from the pen of a practical and experienced falconer. The following notice of a peregrine falcon, favoured me by a neighbouring gentleman, of the highest credibility, affords a very decisive proof of the attachment of the hawk to its master: —The bird was permitted to fly at large and range

wherever it pleased. The summer being warm, and the sitting-room in consequence frequently open, it entered at all times of the day, and was a constant guest at the dinner-table, apparently more for the sake of society than of gratifying its appetite, for, hungry or not, it attended. It evinced great attachment, liked to be taken notice of, and if neglected would get upon its master's shoulder and pinch him gently by the ear. It was very fond of lying upon a lady's lap. The bird was perfectly harmless, though at times a little merrily waggish. A flock of seventeen turkeys frequented a pasture close by the house, under the guidance of a huge turkey-cock, who had long been the bully of the poultry yard. The hawk circling above the plump of birds would stoop with amazing velocity, and strike within a hair's breadth of the crimson head of their leader; a general panic ensued, the word was given *sauve qui peut*, the devil take the hindmost, and the whole array, the old patriarch amongst the first, would fly in disorder to a thick hedge for shelter, with more than usual noise and gabble. Birds smaller than itself it never molested, but hesitated not to play off its

pranks upon the largest that came in its way. A brood hen was the only individual of the feathered tribe that ever offered to resent its waggery. It, however, never attempted to injure the young.

I myself have had hawks which exhibited as strong signs of attachment to me as ever a dog did to its master. One falcon in particular, which travelled with me upwards of two thousand miles, became so very fond of my company, that she would scarcely sit at rest but in my presence. A delicate state of health having induced me to seek the benefits of a change of air and scenery in an excursion through a few of the different counties in the south of England, I, instead of taking with me the usual companion of the wanderer, a dog, took a falcon upon my fist. A gentleman joined at London for the tour. To recount half the instances illustrative of the truth of this argument, with which this adventure was fraught, or which might seem entertaining to those interested in the character of this genus of birds, would doubtless appear foreign to the present subject, and would require a volume for themselves. A few brief

observations, however, to readers in general, may not prove unacceptable.

The falcon approved herself not only an affectionate and faithful, but a most enchanting companion. She had not only such influence as to procure us free access to many of the preserves of the squires and knights that lay in our route, where, amongst partridges and pheasants, she astonished their proprietors; but also the power of acting as a magical passport to the smiles and graces of their fair families: thus affording us opportunities of experiencing the hospitality of their rural mansions. She was a general favourite wherever we went, not less with the ladies than with the gentlemen; and at every inn or village in which for a few days we beat up quarters, she seldom failed to gain for us

"Passing favours and most matchless friends."

The enjoyments she afforded us were often as diversified as the landscapes we travelled through; and the strange contrasts of character which she had the virtue of bringing around her, never failed to yield new interest and amusement to her fellow

travellers. At one time we beheld her surrounded by "high aristocrats and ladies fair;" at another encompassed by a regiment of ragamuffin boys and girls, who often did us the uncalled-for honour to escort us through the streets and villages as we passed along, despite many modest and heart-felt expressions from my friend declining all such proofs of public esteem, which he declared to be quite unmerited on our part, and due only to a band of blind fiddlers. One day we beheld her basking in the smiles and graces of a fine lady,—the next outdone by the overwhelming encomiums of a drunken landlord.

During the whole of our travels, whether by steam boats, stage coaches, post chaises, gigs, omnibuses, vans, on foot or on horseback, she sat upon my hand, and wherever we strayed, whether in public or private house, her perch under night was in my bed room; and during the day, except when out of doors, upon a block, always in the same apartment with her companions. Thus accustomed to be in my company, her attachment became so strong, that she appeared always restless and dissatisfied when not beside me; or, as a lady once observed, "she

never seemed pleased but in the presence of her lord." After an excursion of from four to five months duration, we returned to London, where she died shortly afterwards, but not before she had delighted many of her metropolitan admirers by a few beautiful flights at pigeons. Her death was caused by too close confinement in the city, having brought on a disease of the stomach.

Being in private lodgings, where none but the servants of the family and my own friends were in the habit of entering, she became so "perfectly at home" that she would sometimes walk out of one room into another in search of me; would follow me from one apartment to another, and come from the most distant part of the house even in the dark, or with the hood on, when I chose to call her. This she has done often in the presence of my friends. If I happened to sleep past my usual rising hour, she would leave her block (which stood in a corner of the room with a piece of canvass spread around it to prevent her mutes from soiling the carpet), fly into the bed and take me gently by the ear; or if I happened to be absent for any length of time, or had been late in coming in at night, she, being ac-

customed to see me much at home, and, likewise, to be regularly spoken to and stroked gently on the breast before I retired to rest, would come off her block, wander round the room, and finding the door shut, take a place close by the threshold, and there wait patiently until my return. Nor could the inmates induce her to return to the block. As soon, however, as I entered, she would fly to my arm, get upon my shoulder, rub her beak against my cheek, showing every token of welcome and gladness at my return. For about a week previous to her death, she refused to take any food; and for the last three or four nights she had regularly left her block and wandered in the dark to my bedside, but not being able to get upon it, had crept as close to the head of it, or to where she had heard me breathing, as she could get, and there remained almost motionless until I arose. During the last night she had come to the bedside in the same manner; and in the morning, on looking over, I saw her broad wing stretched upon the floor cold and stiff,—

"Saw the bold (falcon *) stretched upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again."—*Byron.*

* Eagle.

She had come to my bedside either under the vain hope of finding relief from me, or through a desire to be near me to the last.

In honour of the bird, and as a proof that the heroic or romantic spirit of the ladies of old has not yet altogether become extinct in this country, it may here be mentioned that a handsome set of hawk-harness, the gift of two of her fair admirers, was on its way to be presented to her on the day she died. It consisted of a pair of silver bells, a splendidly decorated hood, lined with white satin, a silken plaited leash, with the bird's name, SAPPHO, wrought in needle-work upon it, and a finely turned block, with her name also inscribed upon it.

CHAPTER XI.

HAWKING, as has previously been noticed, is that department of falconry which consists of the flying of the hawks at wild game in the field, and is therefore the chief aim or highest end in the art. It has likewise been observed that hawking is a most sociable pastime, and one whose agreeable and salutary effects may be enjoyed by the feeble as well as by the strong. It has, moreover, the very desirable advantage to the sportsman of involving him but little in offensive trespasses, or infringements upon the rights of his neighbour. Unlike some other of our excellent field sports, which require a vast extent of country for their enjoyment, and which

unavoidably bring the lives of both men and horses often into great peril, damaging fields, &c., it can be practised with perfect satisfaction, as well on foot as on horseback, within a limited space of ground, the play or movements of the hawk seldom exceeding the bounds of a few circular acres of land. This will perhaps appear paradoxical to some who may have formed their opinion of hawking from the writings of Demetrius, of the twelfth century, physician to the Emperor Paleologus, in which a prescription is found, requesting sportsmen to say their prayers before they go out to the field. In former times, when all low lands consisted of little else than dangerous marshes and open cuts or ditches, hawking, especially at aquatic birds, was attended often with sad accidents—that recorded of Henry the Eighth is one very good instance out of many; but the draining and cultivation of land have now generally obviated these. Although the flight of the hawk will occasionally extend to a considerable distance before securing its prey, as in moors and other open situations when game is very wild, causing a sharpish ride, in eight cases out of ten, under prudent manage-

ment, it will not exceed the bounds of two or three hundred paces.

The motions of the hawk in the air, sporting and playing over the heads of the sportsmen, now rising upon her mounty, towering into the clouds, now descending upon her prey with the rapidity of lightning, afford the most exquisite interest and delight to every spectator. Sheridan Knowles, in his admirable play of Love, has a beautiful passage upon the hawk :—

> ——————————"A noble bird.
> My lady knows his bells—is proud of them;
> They are no portion of his excellence;
> It is his own! 'Tis not by them he makes
> His ample wheels; mounts up, and up, and up,
> In spiry rings, piercing the firmament,
> Till he o'ertops his prey, then gives his stoop
> More fleet and sure than ever arrow sped!
> How nature fashioned him for this bold trade!
> Gave him his stars of eyes to range abroad,
> His wings of glorious spread to mow the air,
> And breast of might to use them! I delight
> To fly my hawk. The hawk's a glorious bird;
> Obedient, yet a daring dauntless bird."

Spencer, too, in his Fairy Queen, has a beautiful couplet on the soaring of the hawk :—

> "And in the ayre the soaring hawk did toure,
> Sitting like king of fowles in majesty and poure."

Much misconception seems generally to exist

respecting the manner in which the hawk strikes its prey. By some individuals it would appear to be with its beak, by others with its wings, and by others again with its feet. This last opinion is certainly the most correct, though not altogether satisfactory. The heel or hind claw, accompanied by the sternum or breast-bone alone, are the weapons employed in making the stroke, such as follows a proper stoop; but in cases where the hawk takes the quarry by raking or trussing it, the whole talons, without the breast, act simultaneously. An accident, which nearly proved fatal to an excellent falcon, afforded me sufficient proof of the use the hawk makes of its breast when in the act of making a bold stroke. When exercising this bird at the lure, she happened to make rather a quick and unexpected descent upon it in the air, and striking it boldly, so stunned herself that she fell to the ground, and remained almost lifeless for a few seconds. On examining her breast, I found that a few feathers had been struck off, and the skin considerably grazed. The hawk commonly strikes the quarry upon the spine, though sometimes upon the back of the head, but this very rarely.

"Hawking," says Washington Irving, "is a gallant open sunshiny recreation; it is the generous sport of hunting carried into the skies." Another essayist (Will Waverly) reviewing English pastimes, observes, "As to hawking, it is none of your solitary enjoyments of a selfish Nimrod, but is one of the most generous and delightful recreations ever invented. It has not only the twofold advantage of affording us healthful exercise and wholesome food, but its pleasures are rendered doubly dear to us, because they are often enjoyed amidst the ravishing luxury of dishevelled locks and rosy cheeks of smiling maids and charming matrons."

Enough has been said to inform the reader (if he was not previously informed) that the ladies in former days were permitted to share liberally with the gentlemen in the healthful enjoyments of the field. The encouraging both sexes alike to partake of invigorating exercises out of doors, evinced a most politic consideration, as well as an affectionate one, on the part of our forefathers, as regarded the preservation of health and strength amongst the inhabitants of this nation; for, as is well known, wherever a physical or even a moral defect is per-

mitted in either sex, a certain degeneracy in the offspring is always to be dreaded, which, if not remedied, will, through the course of time, infect a whole community. It moreover affords one out of the innumerable instances that may be drawn from our history, or marked amidst the common scenes of life, shewing that our forefathers had more generosity in their love, as well as in their friendship, than is generally to be found in the present generation; for, should a lady now-a-days not consent to be almost constantly caged up, like a pale canary, to be admired—should her mind lead her a step beyond the insipid and enervating forms of an absurd fashion, or the dull monotony of every-day life, she is to be called immediately to account, questioned by her physician, proscribed by her parson, and reprimanded by our journalists, who seem to have taken the entire keeping of our women out of nature's hands, and often out of their husbands' too. She will be very kindly told that "however much *we* are disposed to admire the spirit with which our gentlemen follow such noble amusements, we cannot countenance it in the fair sex, who are calculated to shine more successfully

amidst the charming exercises of the drawing-room, and rule most omnipotently when they appear least masculine." Now, this is no doubt a most sensible hint to the ladies, and must by many be very well received, because of its kind intention to flatter their vanity rather than to correct mistake. But, with all its apparent ingenuousness, it is nothing less than a most fallacious sentiment of cold-hearted selfishness. The sum of it is this—it threatens the ladies with the incalculable *loss* of their *countenance* should they disobey; and flatters their weakness into a compliance with the most selfish wish, namely, to have them sacrifice their own engagements and health, which, alas! is too often done, for the gratification of the effeminate tastes and languishing hearts of a few of their muffin and crumpet-mawed admirers.

Ladies, accomplished in all the fashionable amusements and graceful arts of the times, may appear in the drawing-room, or wherever these are most called into operation, extremely pleasing—nay, afford us the most exquisite enjoyment; but when we contemplate the fairy scene whence comes this transporting pleasure—when we behold a room

filled with beings moulded to every grace, and crowned with every charm, endowed with all those mental and personal gifts which can adorn society and bless mankind with the kindest offices—when we see amidst such a constellation of beauty and innocence, smiling faces and buoyant hearts, the lurkings of a fell disease that must soon crush their slender forms—see them dropping off around us, like untimely lilies upon the lawn—alas! such pleasures are of a melancholy kind! And when we are told that such are our "drawing-room" pleasures, such their daily concomitants, such the rueful price at which they are too often purchased, from a want of due regularity or propriety in the enjoying of them, from pride and fatuity on the one hand, and unfeeling self-gratification on the other, who among us that is not dead to the tender feelings of humanity, to all those endearing sympathies and affections which blend the existence, the joys, the sorrows of women, with such peculiar interest with our own—who of us, I say, must not mourn over such fatal and delusive pleasures."

The most fatal and insidious of all the maladies

that afflict the human race, phthisis, with its usual host of concomitant evils, hectic fevers, constitutional debility, distortions of body, and other organic diseases, which are now so prevalent, and daily increasing or spreading their destroying roots in this country, dooming hundreds of young and happy beings to a premature grave, owe their origin almost wholly to the present habits of the people. Both sexes are alike labouring under this national evil, but more particularly the female, whose modes of living, dressing, and exercising are more under the rigid control of a capricious and arbitrary fashion, however much opposed to the comfort, health, or physical developement of the body.

It is entirely owing to our unnatural habits, and not to the change of climate, (as has been erroneously supposed), that such degeneracy in our species, such prevalency of disease, have taken place amongst us. In former times, when people lived more naturally, such maladies were seldom seen in this healthful country. How different must golden England then have appeared, when, instead of the effeminacy which now pervades her camps

and ships—instead of the narrow chests gasping for breath, distorted frames, and tainted countenances that crowd her decks and her streets, she displayed the hardy frame of the fearless seaman, the stalwart limb of the courageous soldier, and the straight commanding and well-built stature of the healthy citizen—instead of the slender, nerveless, and almost bloodless forms, that now garnish her courts and her drawing-rooms, too tender for her winds to blow upon, too delicate to endure her suns, she set forth her tall, vigorous, and graceful figures, full of life and blood, that shrunk under neither toil nor storm!

But whilst a too delicate complexion or languishing constitution in woman must always be deplored, it is not intended here to commend anything masculine either in her taste or character, which is not more repulsive than incompatible with the true qualities of her sex. Women have been compared to the flowers of the field; and notwithstanding the diversity of character or genera of the latter given by Linnæus, and the ten species of the former by Simonides, the similitude is apt, and will serve perhaps to illustrate this point. The masculine

may be said to resemble the huge unsavoury weed from which the "charm of powerful trouble" of the "weird sisters" *(hemlock)* was taken; the delicate order, our hot-house plants, too tender for our climate, and which appear to live and bloom only by the force of art; the undegenerate specimen of our English women may be compared with our loveliest flowers, which drink the perfection of their beauty and sweetness from our native soil and native air, with that salubrious plant which "never ceases uttering sweets."

But it may be asked whether I mean to contend that music, dancing, drawing, *Les Belles Lettres*, or any other drawing-room accomplishments and amusements, are injurious to health? Certainly not. If judiciously pursued and happily enjoyed, the very reverse is the case. Indeed, perhaps nothing could be devised more conducive to health and pure happiness than the intellectual pleasures and bodily exercise they are capable of yielding; nor perhaps could anything give a greater charm or higher lustre to the female character; but when these, and other tasks of a domestic kind, are made the daily occupations of ladies, without being varied

or qualified by more invigorating exercise out of doors, they will soon impair the soundest constitution. It is, then, from want of a proportionate degree of energetic and alterative action to the body and mind that they may be said to be injurious to health, and consequently to the happiness of our British ladies.

But perhaps some one may be disposed to reply, that our ladies in general take out-door recreation; that they take either an airing in a carriage, or enjoy a walk every day when the weather is fine. This may be all very true; but what is the difference between the exercise of being driven out in a carriage or walking a few paces in a blink of sunshine, and that of sitting or walking in a room? There can be no material difference, except such as is produced by any change in the atmosphere or scene; the position of the body is the same, the same action given to the muscles. Now, it is only from a certain increase and occasional change of muscular action, alternately acting upon the different organs or faculties of the body, arousing them from a dormant enervating state of inactivity, that the salutary and invigorating effects of bodily exer-

cise are to be obtained, and not from a listless or even continued uniformity of it. Nor should out-door exercise be confined to our mildest weather only. On the contrary, it should be persevered in to a moderate extent in every variety of weather, so that the frame be properly tempered to endure the purifying influence and fertilizing changes of our climate, as intended by nature. Nothing will more effectively remove that constitutional nervousness and irritability of temper, so frequently contracted by close confinement in the house, (the common index of a morbid habit), and more rapidly restore to the body and mind their proper tone, than a good walk or ride in a sharp and bracing air, or even combating a brisk storm, especially one of dry snow.

The energies of the body and mind being brought into active exertion, and the stimulus given to the nervous and sanguiferous systems, by the state of the weather, have, I am convinced, a far more salutary and permanent effect upon the frame than the shock of either cold baths or electrifying machines. This no doubt will appear a position contrary to the received opinion, but it is not, on that

account, contrary to the laws of nature, and may at once be borne out by turning our eyes towards the vigorous and hardy constitutions of those individuals whose habits expose them most to the severity of our climate. Had Dr Darwin, in his Zoonomia, instead of requesting young ladies to be hung up by the neck, or stretched for a few hours every day upon a sofa, to straighten or strengthen their frames, recommended to them a full and free enjoyment of country air, with plenty of active pedestrian and equestrian exercise, in our "flower-enamelled groves and refreshing fields," which, in his "botanic rambles," seem to have contributed so bounteously to his corporeal parts, he had perhaps done society a greater service.

Dr. Johnson, speaking of this exercise, observes, "I cannot but think this riding might be easily revived among the ladies, when they consider how much it must contribute to their beauty. This would lay up the best portion they could bring into a family, *a good stock of health*, to transmit to their posterity. Such a charming bloom as this gives the countenance is very much preferable to the real or affected feebleness or softness which

appear in the faces of our modern beauties. The natural gaiety and spirit which shine in the complexion of such as form to themselves a sort of diverting industry, by choosing recreations that are exercises, surpass all the false ornaments and graces that can be put on by applying the whole dispensary of a toilet. A healthy body and a cheerful mind give charms as irresistible as inimitable." Of the beauteous Dyctinna he further observes, "The becoming negligence in her dress, the severe sweetness of her looks, and a certain innocent boldness in all her behaviour, are the effect of active recreations in the country."

But I have again digressed too far from my subject, for which the critic may, and not without some reason, hold me censurable; but should these remarks prove a means, however humble, of contributing to the health and enjoyment of a single fellow-creature, I shall consider myself sufficiently rewarded, nor will I grudge my censurer his tax.

Little more of practical importance remains to be said upon hawking; and in concluding this part of the essay, I shall only add, that as it is not only one of the most noble and ancient of all our pas-

times, but one of the most delightful and salutary, it is doubtless highly deserving of the patronage of every individual who wishes to promote healthful and innocent amusements amongst a people. Nor is it the less deserving of our particular interest because it has been so much a favourite recreation of the tender sex. On the contrary, as it is almost the only one of our rural sports which they can safely enjoy with us, its claims to a high place in the list of our pastimes, in the eyes of every gallant sportsman, must appear doubly great. It is, then, to be hoped that we shall again see this noble enjoyment revived in this country; that the hawk, which has been so long banished, and eagerly sought after to be destroyed, will be recalled and welcomed back "on perches proud to grace our halls;" and that we shall again ere long behold the English lady,

> "On palfrey fleet, with blushing face,
> Urge gracefully the airy chase;
> With hawk upon her milk-white hand,
> The fairest form of fairy land;
> Or Dian-like, with sylvan train,
> Gay sporting o'er the flowery plain."

But having taken such a liberty with the fair

sex in this chapter, it may perhaps be thought but meet that I apologize or "declare my intentions"

> "For daring so approach the shrine
> Where beings dwell all but divine;"

which I shall do with all the cordiality of a true born bachelor, who, having run himself into an unforeseen flirtation, wishes to retreat without the sacrifice of a single smile. Having no more eligible expedient at hand, I shall "declare myself" in the sentiment of an accomplished and facetious bachelor, from the Mill of Pindar Cockloft, Esq.:—

> "Though jogging down the hill of life
> Without the comfort of a wife
> And though I ne'er a helpmate chose
> To stock my house and mend my hose,
> With care my person to adorn,
> And spruce me up on Sunday morn,
> My back to warm when night is cold,
> Or bless me with a wholesome scold,
> Still do I love the gentle sex,
> And still with cares my brain perplex
> To keep them free from ev'ry pain
> Disease begets, or tyrant's chain;
> To see them shining in their sphere,
> Like cloudless planets round the year,
> All pure, all simple, all refined,
> The sweetest solace of mankind."

END OF PART FIRST.

PART SECOND.

CONTAINING

Notices of the different Hawks used in British Hawking, the Proper Method of Keeping, Training, and Flying the Birds, the Apparatus belonging to the Art, &c.

FALCONRY.

CHAPTER I.

The Hawk belongs to the class of birds *Raptores*, and order *Falconidæ*. Naturalists of old, like those of modern times, not having shewn much unanimity of opinion respecting the number and division of the hawk kind, and it not being necessary to the purpose of this volume to enter into the nice or disputed distinctions of ornithologists, I shall no-

tice those only that are generally observed by falconers. The most common distribution, then, is into the Long and Short-winged Hawks, the Hawks and the Falcons, the Hawks of the Lure, and the Hawks of the Fist.

All the falcon kind belong to the long-winged class, from a superior length of wing; whilst the hawks, strictly speaking, such as the goshawk and the sparrow-hawk, are of the short-winged order, from a comparative shortness of wing. The division of hawks into those of the lure and of the fist, although sanctioned by custom, is a very unsatisfactory way of designating them. Every bird in falconry may be called *of the lure*, as all, if properly trained to it, alike obey it. The goshawk and sparrowhawk are termed hawks of the *fist*, and not of the *lure*, because they fly at the game *directly off* the hand, instead of mounting in the air, and *waiting on* like the other hawks. It will be found, however, by the practical falconer, that these birds are not only as fond of the lure as any other hawk, but when inured to it, are far less liable to mistakes in the field, and far more under command, than when without it.

The most appropriate distinction or term would be hawks of the *soar*, instead of hawks of the *lure*, which at once explains its meaning, and which, from its simplicity, I have adopted. It may likewise be observed, for the benefit of the uninitiated falconer, that the terms Falcon and Hawk, although specifically applied to birds of two distinct genera, are often in a general sense used synonymously; that is, the term *hawk*, besides being used strictly to distinguish the hawk kind from the falcon kind, is popularly applied to both. It is moreover to be noticed, that every bird trained and used for the purpose of taking game or other animals living at large, is, in the language of falconry, styled *hawk*.

THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

Aquila Chrysactos.

In the preceding part of the work it has been observed, that eagles of different kinds are employed for the purpose of hunting down birds and beasts of the larger size; but being used chiefly in

foreign countries, or rarely trained to the chase in Britain, little need be said in this work respecting them. The method of managing them, however, may, if not useful, be interesting to some readers.

The golden eagle, which, it would appear, ranks foremost on the list of the aquiline order of hawkers, (and which alone need be noticed here), may be either taken and reclaimed in the mature state, or procured young from the eyrie; when captured in the adult age, he is subdued with no ordinary difficulty; but taken young from the nest, he may soon be rendered tame and docile. When captured, the first step to be taken with the mature bird is to put upon him the brail, or a piece of furniture serving as a strait jacket, made of leather, to deprive him of the use of his wings. After this a pair of bells are applied to his legs, and leathern boots put upon his feet, to prevent the talons from wounding the trainer. The eyes of the bird are next to be partially blinded, by means of a hood properly fitted to the head; and the beak, if long and sharp, is pared or blunted, but not the talons, these being of the most important use in holding the prey. Thus clad, the captive is allowed the

liberty of a room and a voluntary fast, which sometimes lasts throughout several days; whilst the trainer addresses himself to his pupil in the most insinuating manner, both by day and night, until it is brought to endure stroking upon the breast, feeding from the hand, and carrying upon a sort of portable perch. The trainer next begins to shew it its food at a short distance off, by holding it out in his hand, or throwing it from him, to which the bird often runs with great avidity. Different kinds of live quarry, in a string to prevent their escape, are now to be turned out to its view; and being at this stage relieved from all its former incumbrances, except the bells and a creance, it commonly takes after them at first sight, if sharp in appetite. Accustomed for a few days to take its prey in a string, it is at length to be taken into the field to hunt down wild animals.

The nestling or young eagle is much more easily trained, being less stubborn and less liable to fly away. It seldom requires any other harness than the bells and jesses; and captured quarry in a string turned out to it as to the adult bird, precedes its entry at the wild game in the field.

When the eagle is intended to hunt large animals, such as the wild boar, the stag, &c., a skin of the same animal is procured, and being stuffed so as to represent life, is placed in a running posture upon a frame resembling a cart. Within the eyeholes of this effigy is deposited a quantity of fresh meat, from which the bird is taught to feed. Having fed two or three times from the head of the figure in a stationary state, horses are put to the carriage to move it forward; the eagle is then allowed to fly from a distance, and perch upon it whilst in motion. This lesson is repeated a few times, and the speed of the horses gradually increased during the flight of the pursuer, until they attain their utmost pitch. When overtaken by the bird, the horses are stopped almost instantaneously, and kept stationary until the eagle has fed. Exercised in this manner for five or six days, the tuition of the eagle may be said to be completed, and he may now be carried into the field and flown at wild game.

THE GERFALCON.

Falco Candicans.

So called from the Latin *candicans* (*whitish*), because of its whitish colour. The name Gyrfalcon, or *Ger*falcon, most probably owes its origin either to the Greek γυρος, meaning a circle or circuit, because the bird performs circular evolutions, or gyrations, when mounting in the air; or from the Latin *gero*, to execute or achieve, because of all birds it has been considered the foremost for the chase, and capable of the greatest execution or achievements in the fields. These derivations, however can hardly be admitted as wholly satisfactory, especially the former, as every hawk of the soar mounts by a circling course. *Jerkin*, the name given by falconers to the male of this species, appears to be a contraction of the word Gerfalcon, or Jerfalcon as it is sometimes written.

Of all the birds used in falconry, in this country, the Gerfalcon has ever been ranked the foremost. Superior in strength and agility to every other

bird of its size, and endowed with powers of flight equalled by none that wing the air, with a corresponding courage, he dashes into the air fearless of every other bird, however large; nor will he at times hesitate to dispute precedence with the "monarch of the skies." Nor need any one at all acquainted with the anatomical structure of this bird wonder at his power. The breadth of the sternum, the depth of the keel, affording a vast extent of surface for the muscles that move the wings; the furcula circular, broad, and strong, giving a firm support to the shoulders, with his long acuminated wings, and with the feathers firm, narrow, and so arranged as to pierce the air and resist pressure, give him powers which few of the feathered tribe possess. Mr Mudie considers him the boldest, the most perfectly winged, and in proportion to his weight, the strongest both for action and endurance of all the feathered tribe. This bird is about one-fourth larger than the peregrine falcon, of a lighter colour, which, on advancing in years, approaches almost to white. In mode of flight it strongly resembles that bird, but is thought to be even more rapid and more elevated.

The gerfalcon breeds in Iceland, Norway, and in the colder regions of both continents. According to Dr. Richardson, it is a constant resident in the Hudson Bay territories. It holds its eyrie on the most inaccessible precipice or cliff of a rock, and lays commonly four eggs, resembling, it is said, in colour, those of the ptarmigan. In Britain it is by no means a common visitant.

Living in the most desert and solitary situations, but little is known respecting the habits of the gerfalcon in its wild state. When properly reclaimed, however, it is very tractable, and remarkably affectionate to its keeper. Although a native of the colder and hyperborean regions, it seems to receive no injury from this climate, and will live in it in perfect health, if properly treated, for a considerable number of years.

Formerly, and when hawking was in its glory, large prices were paid for this bird. At this none will wonder who can appreciate its worth and beauty. Gifted by nature with the finest symmetry of parts, the nicest proportions of strength, elegance, and speed—capable of affording sport of the highest order, outstripping the fleetest hound

at the hare, outdoing the nicest marksman at the fowl, and bringing down the proud swan from her loftiest flight, can be no mean gratifications to its master. Scaliger observes, "The gerfalcon will assail the swan in its airy flight, and bring it to the earth as if shot with a ball. The game for which it is most celebrated consists of the hare, the heron, the wild goose, the pheasant, and other quarry of the larger sort."

The gerfalcon may either be procured young from the nest, or taken in a mature state. When from the former, the task of the trainer is comparatively easy; but from the latter, the reclaiming of him is a more arduous undertaking. As, however, it is to be managed by the falconer much in the same manner with the peregrine falcon, the proper instructions will be given when treating of the training of that bird.

CHAPTER II.

THE PEREGRINE FALCON.

Falco Peregrinus.

So named from the Latin *peregrinus*, peregrinating or migrating, because this bird was formerly considered only a traveller in this country.

It being now established that this hawk is a native of Britain, and also that it is no other in kind than the Falcon gentle (Falco gentilis) of Scotland, it may be questioned which of the two names should be allotted to the bird. The derivation of falcon gentle, or slight falcon, as it is

likewise called, does not appear very clear or accountable, as the bird is not only the strongest and largest, but the fiercest falcon that inhabits this island. It may not improbably have received the name of gentle from the Latin *gentiles*, a term applied by the ancient Romans to all strangers or foreigners not subject to the Roman empire, to distinguish them from the *provinciales*, or inhabitants of the provinces. Under this supposition, then, the bird being there considered a stranger or foreigner, may have, in like manner, received the name of *gentile*, which has probably been corrupted into gentle. The word *gentilis*, as every linguist knows, is likewise used in an almost contrary sense, importing peculiar or proper to a nation, but in this light it is quite inadmissible, as the bird is not peculiar to this country. According to some authors, the term has been given because this bird was the favourite hawk amongst the gentlemen of old. This opinion, however, carries but little weight with it, for originally the hawk was excluded from the use of those popularly styled *gentlemen* unless ennobled. According to the restrictive forms of hawking, the falcon

gentle and tiercel gentle were the "hawks appointed for a prince," and tolerated only amongst those individuals distinguished by the epithet *noble*. On this ground, then, the word *nobilis*, instead of *gentilis*, would doubtless and more appropriately have been the term given to it. The term has been by some supposed to have been derived from the French *gentile*, meaning neat, handsome, fine, because of the beauty of its form.

Whatever derived from, the name gentle has long been in use; and how far the ornithologist is justified in discarding it, I shall not attempt to judge. Perhaps the term peregrine falcon is the most appropriate, not because it was formerly considered a bird of passage, but on account of its migrating disposition from locality to locality, even in its native country. This term, then, being expressive of a very prominent and peculiar trait in the character of the bird, is evidently entitled to the preference. This term, too, has not improbably been given to it from the circumstance of the bird being, in early days, caught chiefly near Falconsweard in Holland, where it is said to be only a passenger, and not a native. Hence comes the

name *passage hawk*, a term invariably applied to all hawks of this kind captured there. The names of *Blue-hawk* and *Falcon* have likewise been given to this bird; and in the language of falconry, the latter term is exclusively applied to the female, whilst the males, as also that of the goshawk, is called *tiercel*, from the French *tiers, a third*, because it is about a third less than the female.

The peregrine falcon ranks next to the gerfalcon upon the falconer's list. Indeed, except for a few particular kinds of quarry, its inferiority even to this bird is somewhat questionable. For general sport, especially in this country, where it is a match for the largest of our game, and where the gerfalcon is seldom seen alive, it may justly be styled the most important bird in British hawking. From the remarkable changes of colour which time or moulting effects upon the plumage of this bird, many have described it under its different coats as variety in species. Its first plumage (which differs considerably in shade, even amongst birds of the same nest) is lightish brown on the belly, marked by rusty longitudinal spots or bars; dark iron brown, sometimes tinged with bluish grey, on the

back and head, with a conspicuous black patch on each cheek, called by naturalists whiskers. Its second plumage is distinguishable from the first by being of a lighter brown on the belly, with the bars transverse instead of longitudinal; and on the back, instead of the rusty brown, dark bluish grey. After the second plumage, however, its subsequent moultings are marked by scarcely any other change than gradually becoming lighter as the bird advances in years.

The female in this species, as in every other of the hawk genus, is considerably larger than the male, and from her superior strength, has generally been the most highly prized. The average length from the extreme of the head to the tip of the tail measures from twenty-one to twenty-two inches, whilst that of the male seldom exceeds or even approaches to seventeen; and her average weight is about two pounds, whilst the male weighs about twenty ounces. The preference generally given to the female has not unfrequently been attributed to an imagined deficiency of courage in the male; but this is evidently a mistake. I have frequently flown both male and female together at

large quarry, but I have never been able to discover any decided difference in point of courage. This notion most probably owes its rise to a peculiar shyness common to the male of most birds of prey. Few persons who have witnessed the daring, bold, and headlong flight of this hawk at his quarry, will be inclined to accuse him of any want of courage.

The peregrine falcon is a bird of solitary habits, living chiefly in the wilder, rocky, and mountainous parts of the country. It has rarely been known to approach houses or villages, and the farm-yard is perfectly safe from its inroads. The sad havoc often committed amongst poultry by the hen-harrier being frequently imputed to him, has contributed greatly to augment the number of his enemies; but I have never met with a person who could authenticate an instance of the peregrine falcon in the wild state stooping upon a domestic fowl.

It is naturally nice in its food, and will always prefer a warm or fresh killed bird to a carcass of a day old. It is said to have a predilection for moor game, but although the wild and open habi-

tat of these birds (being most favourable to the flight of the hawk) may not unfrequently invite it to prey upon them, I am satisfied it is less fastidious in its choice than some naturalists would have people to believe. I have examined several of its nests, not indeed in moorland situations, but two of them were on the sea coast within a couple of miles of a good moorfowl province, and in none of them did I ever find so many fragments of grouse or any other game as of birds in general. Amongst the common rubbish of bones, feathers, &c., about the nest of the last I visited, I detected the skeletons of two rooks, a carrion crow, a partridge, magpie, gull, and portions of a duck, with some other aquatic birds. I am therefore inclined to believe that its natural or ordinary food is no other than what the immediate neighbourhood of its retreat affords.

It has already been remarked that this bird is erratic—of a migratory disposition—frequently taking up its residence in open and retired situations, where it can command a considerable view of the surrounding country, remaining, if unmolested, for a few weeks, and then moving away to

another situation. In the "Scraps of a Naturalist," by an intimate friend (a manuscript which has not yet found its way to the press, containing many excellent and interesting notices, especially on Ornithology, and of which I have been favoured with a perusal), it is stated that a peregrine falcon had for several years paid an annual visit of a few weeks' duration to an open marshy flat in the vicinity of the author's residence, and that its presence there was always indicated by the appearance of the place. Wings and skeletons of curlews, rooks, gulls, &c., were invariably found here and there throughout the plain; and during the whole time of its stay, scarcely a curlew, rook, gull, or heron, or any other of the larger frequentors of the flat, were to be seen. He further observes that another falcon in a similar manner had been known to frequent Dunstanburgh Castle, a retired and uninhabited ruin upon the coast of Northumberland, for upwards of eight years. This bird, however, which was remarkably beautiful, was at length wantonly shot.

The peregrine falcon breeds amongst rocks, and usually in the most solitary and inaccessible situa-

tions. In the construction of her eyrie she is by no means nice, seldom employing anything else than the common rubbish found in the place she chooses upon, and lining it with a few feathers or wool. Situation and security to her are of more importance than the splendour of her dwelling, and besides having it as far as possible unapproachable by man, she endeavours to have it well sheltered from rain, and shaded from the sun. Few other birds are disposed to make a neighbour of her, or dispute the empire; and no sooner has she chosen her spot than all the other inhabitants begin to disperse, leaving her alone in all the majesty of solitude. Wherever she goes every bird seems to crouch beneath her wing. The raven and large gull will sometimes appear to challenge her flight; but this is done only at such times as when they are sure she is not in a preying mood. The female, as I have previously remarked, is much larger than the male; she is also both mistress and master of the household; nay, she reigns with such absolute power, that even her husband dare only at certain times come into her presence. She rarely permits him to sit by her; and when

she is disposed to look upon him with a lover's eye, inviting him to her, he approaches in the most submissive manner, bowing his head and cowering his wings in acknowledgment of the honour, and in testimony of how unwilling he is to incur her displeasure, as every other henpecked husband does, and has a right to do. She generally lays four eggs, but seldom more than three are productive. The young are kept in high condition by the parent birds, being bountifully supplied with fresh food every day. They commonly begin to leave the nest and perch upon some of the rocks or cliffs in the vicinity when about five or six weeks old, but seldom take their final departure until several weeks older.

It would appear to be a common opinion amongst naturalists, that this bird forces its young from the nest when fully fledged, to seek fresh quarters and shift for themselves; but I hope I shall be excused the offence of entering my *caveat* against this suspicious dictum. I have known several nests, and watched closely the habits and movements of both old and young, but I have never been able to detect the slightest ground for

such belief; on the contrary, I have invariably found the young, under the eye of the old, if unmolested, lingering about, and frequenting their native spot for weeks, nay, months after beginning to fly, retreating often at night to their nest, especially in wet or stormy weather. With all due deference, therefore, to some of our distinguished ornithologists, I am disposed to exculpate this bird from the charge of such an anomalous breach of the laws of nature and of parental affection, believing that when nature has properly fitted the young for the journey, she will lead them abroad like other birds to provide for themselves. As to the notion that the old compel the young to look steadfastly at the sun, and that the bones of the hawk attract gold (the metal of the sun) as the loadstone does iron,—they are too absurd to merit a moment's consideration. Hawks, neither old nor young, wild nor reclaimed, can endure much sun; whenever the weather becomes hot, they invariably take to the shade; their nests, also, are generally found in the most shaded recesses of rocks. It is, moreover, a well known truth among falconers, that whenever their birds are exposed for

any length of time to a hot sun, as they sometimes are when confined to the block, they are liable to be seized with a complaint from which they seldom recover.

How far such opinions may be correct when applied to the eagle, I shall not attempt to determine, for not having the opportunity of observing the habits of this bird, I cannot speak with certainty; but from the information I have received on the subject, I am half inclined to believe that many of the wonders attached to its history, such as the old taking the young to the edge of the eyrie, commanding them to fix their eyes on the dazzling sun, throwing over the nest, and banishing from every parental care, such as do not acquit themselves with credit during the ordeal,—the old getting the young upon their backs like the ancient Trojan (only reversing the case between father and son) and carrying them through the clouds, &c., are nothing more than poetical illusions and fabulous allegories, taken from the ancient mythology, or from the history of the bird's patron deity — Jupiter himself.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOBBY.

Falco Subbuteo.

So called from the Latin *buteo*, a buzzard, and *sub*, under or less, because this bird is less than the buzzard. The common name of *Hobby*, by which this hawk is known, is derived from the French *hobereau*, and the male is termed *Robin*.

The hobby is a native of England, but leaves it about the end of autumn for a more genial climate during the winter months, and returns again in spring, before the commencement of the breeding

season. It builds in trees, and sometimes takes possession of a deserted nest of a crow, laying commonly four eggs of a bluish colour, interspersed with yellowish spots. The length of the female is about thirteen inches, and that of the male from an inch to an inch and a half shorter. It is of a bluish colour on the back and top of the head; brownish white tinged with red on the breast and belly, marked with rusty streaks; light on the throat, with a blackish spot on each cheek descending from the eye.

This bird has always been considered remarkably bold. Colonel Montague says of it, "Small as this species of the falcon is, it is inferior to none in point of courage; while its flight is wonderfully rapid, and supported with undiminished vigour for a considerable time; it will frequently pounce upon a partridge; but its favourite game seems to be the lark, to which it is a great enemy, and is frequently taken in pursuit of it by bird-catchers in their nests." It has long been known by the name of *dare hawk*, from being, as some say, extensively used for catching or *daring* partridges, quails, larks, and other small birds. These birds so

dread the sight of the hobby, that when it keeps soaring aloft, they will choose rather to commit themselves to the mercy of men and dogs, or be trampled upon by horses, than venture into the sky; so that nets are often carried in this sport, and thrown over the game. Although the hobby has been frequently used to take partridges, quails, &c., its principal quarry has been snipes, larks, thrushes, and blackbirds. It mounts well, and can be brought to *wait on* with considerable satisfaction, affording excellent diversion. The "*Sportsman*," treating of it, says, "She is not only nimble and light of wing, but dares encounter kites, buzzards, and crows, and will give blow for blow, till sometimes they close, and come tumbling down together."

Blome, treating of this bird, observes, "She must not be flown in the heat of the day, for then she is apt to soar and be lost, (although but for a time, being to be found again), but about two o'clock in the afternoon begin to flee her, and so hold on till near sunset; and if you order *(manage)* her according to the directions given for the falcon, she will make a hawk of great delight, for you may

flee her oftener, and where you can't any other. She is often made to flee at partridges at the first of season; also the quail, wheatear, and the like. In plain champaign fields, where great and tall bushes grow, the hobby will make abundance of stoopings (which resting sometimes); and if the bushes stand at some reasonable distance, the birds will be so terrified at the sight of her as to suffer you almost to take them up in your hand, but you may easily kill them with a cross bow." —"The eyess hobby," continues the same author, "is best for the mount; and I hold this the best way for reclaiming and preparing them:—you must take her out of the nest a little before she is able to stand on the side thereof; then provide some other nest on any tree in your garden or orchard, about seven or eight feet from the ground, and then at set times feed her with bits from the sharp end of a stick: and when she is able to stand stiff upon her legs, and to tug hard for her meat, then teach her to come from thence by your art in luring and calling her, though it be but a foot at first, and so by degrees further and further, until she will come from the nest to you as far as

she can well hear you, and there must she attend on her wings until you take her in. When she is full summed, she must have her jesses, bewits, and bells, with other usual ornaments and dressings; then must she be made acquainted with the hood and carriage on your fist all day; she must be also accustomed to men, horses, and dogs; and she must be trained with larks, which had need be let loose with a great deal of caution, that she may perceive not they are let go from your hand; her first trains should be let loose in a creance or brown thread, and mounted thirty or forty feet high before you unhood her; three or four trains thus killed will be a sufficient introduction. When she is thus thoroughly made, you may flee her at the lark with advantage of the wind and near approach, and afterwards you need not use so much care, for she will soon gain strength, and understand her business. At such times, when you do not use or flee her, you need to look after her only at feeding times, remembering to draw her by your lure and voice, at least a quarter, if not a mile from home, and there feed and leave her; for when she hath once fed, feaked, and rejoiced, she will soon

find her way home to the place where she was bred and brought up. On resting days, when she is gorged, you may find her in the heat of the day flying and soaring aloft, whereby she becomes acquainted with the adjacent places, so that if you leave her three or four miles from home with her prey in her foot, you need not fear her coming home after she hath eaten it; but you must not trust her thus longer than the beginning of September," this being about the time of the year the bird is said to leave this country. As the hobby is trained in each particular like the other falcons, it will be further considered with them in a subsequent part.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MERLIN.

Falco Œsalon.

The name of this bird is apparently derived from the Greek αισσω to rush, because it is supposed to rush more dauntlessly upon its prey than many of the larger hawks. Its common name of merlin is derived from the French *emerillon*, a whirling instrument, because this hawk is thought to whirl about in the air. The male is called the Jack.

The merlin may be said to be the peregrine falcon in miniature, so great is its resemblance in

general character and plumage. It is the smallest of our British hawks, but inferior to none in spirit, elegance, and courage. The female measures from twelve to thirteen inches in length; the male seldom more than ten. It is of a deep brown colour, tinged with blue on the back and head; reddish yellow on the belly, marked with oblong spots of dark brown; on the throat lightish grey, tinged with yellow under the eye.

The merlin was the favourite hawk of the ladies of old, as appears from the following lines of Spencer, or perhaps old Chaucer, as I quote from memory:—

> "A merlin small she held upon her hand,
> With hood and jessies gallantly bedight;
> But little did he need or hood or band,
> Could he but *gaze on her*, full *safe* were *he* from flight."

Its flight, though easy and rapid, appears always hurried. In the wild state, it frequently takes its prey unawares; but the usual method is by bold and honest pursuit. Macgillivray says, "It sometimes perches on a stone or crag, apparently for the purpose of inspecting the neighbourhood; and from its station, should a flock of small birds come

up, it fixes upon an individual one, from the pursuit of which it is not drawn by the presence of others. Its prey consists of larks, thrushes, chaffinches, sand-pipers, plovers, and even partridges. Some authors assert that it also feeds upon beetles, and other insects, a habit common to all the smaller hawks, as well as most owls."

The breeding place of the merlin is commonly amongst long heath and precipitous banks, though sometimes upon trees, taking possession of an old nest of a crow or magpie. It is likewise not unfrequently found in the cliffs of rocks, producing commonly five eggs of a greenish-white colour.

I once witnessed a most interesting sight between two merlins in the wild state and a snipe. As I was crossing Lamberton Moor, accompanied by a gentleman of Berwick, we happened to see two of these birds, mounting almost perpendicularly in the air, within a few paces of us. Our first impression was, that they were amusing themselves by endeavouring to soar above each other, but on watching their movements for a short time, we soon discovered the object of their pursuit only a short distance above them. One of the hawks

appeared from this time to gain rapidly upon the snipe, whilst the other appeared to make but little progress. At length, and when the snipe and foremost hawk had almost disappeared in the sky, the latter, having apparently gained the ascendancy, made a rapid stoop, but the former, by a sudden change in its course, eluded the stroke, and having thrown its antagonist, made now a descent like a falling star. At this moment the hawk that had kept below, no doubt waiting for this event, darted like lightning across the sky towards it, which, however, the snipe, by another dexterous shift, escaped also. Still all was in vain on the part of the pursued, for before it got many yards, the other hawk shot down upon it, and received it in its talons.

These minnikin falcons frequently pursue woodcocks in a similar manner, which, like the snipe, lark, and heron, seek an escape by mounting almost perpendicularly in the air. Like the hobby, the merlin is held in great dread by birds more than double its own weight. Even the pheasant and grouse shew a great aversion to stir whenever he is in view, though we have no instance of his hav-

ing preyed upon such large birds. It is so bold and fierce that it will sometimes enter into combat with birds of prey much larger than itself; nay, I have seen it (living at hack) take a piece of meat from a tame raven, and beat him into a shameful retreat. Whenever its attention is fixed on a particular bird, it will allow scarcely anything to check or divert it from its purpose, but pursue it often with such reckless determination, that it not unfrequently hazards its own safety, as the following instance shews:—

One day, upon Newton Links, in Northumberland, my friend previously mentioned discovered a green plover pursued by a merlin at some distance off, and which apparently made directly towards him. It was apparently using its utmost efforts to reach the spot where he stood, in hopes no doubt of finding refuge, but it was defeated, for instead of his appearance abating, it rather aroused the energies of the pursuer, and the plover became so closely pressed that it was induced to stoop for shelter amongst some tufts of long grass on the way; which attempt, however, proved equally unavailing, for just as it was entering the cover, a

stroke from the hawk brought it to the ground. On advancing to within three or four paces of the spot, he saw the two struggling with each other upon the ground. The hawk was now either so engaged with the plover that it did not see him, or so determined in its purpose that it would not leave it, for it allowed him to walk deliberately forward and take up both in his hands.

Merlins taken young from the nest are very difficult to rear; and some falconers have given the preference to those captured in the mature state. When taken too young, they are apt to be affected with a disease in the spine, which produces paralysis sometimes in one or in both sides or limbs, from which they seldom recover. But if they are allowed to be properly fledged before they are removed from their parents, and kept dry and in a place moderately warm, with plenty of liberty, and warm birds or fresh killed meat for a few days at first, or until they are able to fly at hack, the difficulty of rearing them will be found considerably reduced. But the proper rules for managing them will be given hereafter.

CHAPTER V.

THE KESTRIL.

Falco Tinnunculus.

THE name *tinnunculus*, is derived from the Latin *tinnio*, on account of the voice or cry of this bird having a sort of tinkling sound. It has received the name of kestril probably from castrel, a term provincially applied to a degenerate or mean person, because it was accounted the meanest or least useful of the hawks of the chase; or, which is more likely, because it was the hawk formerly as-

signed by the restrictive laws of falconry to the meanest or lowest ranks of people.

The kestril, or castrel, or windhover, as it is also frequently called, although the least valued of all the hawks for the purpose of the falconer, for other purposes it is esteemed useful in a high degree; and although formerly slighted by dignity and fashion, and degraded to the lowest rank,—in elegance, beauty, and gentleness, it is inferior to none of its tribe. It is the commonest of all our British hawks. It is of a lightish brown colour, tinged with a leaden hue on the back and head, and spotted with black; lighter brown with a rusty tinge on the breast and belly; and on each cheek darkly streaked downwards from the eye. The female measures from thirteen to fourteen inches in length; and the male seldom more, but sometimes less than an inch shorter. By this measurement it will be seen that the male and female of this genus differ less in size than any other of our hawks. They are not particular in the choice of a place for their nidification: a recess or crevice in an old castle, an excavation of a rock, a deserted crow's or pie's nest, as conveniency suits,

will serve. The female lays commonly five eggs of a sort of orange colour, tinged with purple, and spotted with a dirty red.

The kestril lives chiefly on mice, insects, and small birds, such as sparrows, chaffinches, and linnets; but it also occasionally preys upon larger objects. According to Buffon, it sometimes carries off "a partridge much heavier than itself; it also catches pigeons which straggle from the flocks." Some naturalists appear sceptical as to the veracity of Buffon's statement, but it appears to be supported by more recent authority. In winter, when mice and insects are generally buried beneath the snow, it will not unfrequently be seen pursuing the lark aloft, in a most determined manner; sometimes missing, sometimes securing her after a long and well contested chase. This I have witnessed on several occasions. When pursuing the lark or any other boldly flying quarry, its flight is both rapid and supported with undiminished vigour for a considerable time; but its passage through the air is commonly slow, easy, and graceful, stopping occasionally, and remaining

perfectly stationary a few seconds to examine the scene below.

Although this bird is easily reclaimed, it is very difficult to render it an efficient agent in hawking. It would appear to have been in former times regularly trained to hunt partridges and other smaller quarry, but it never was in much esteem for the field; and by the preference given to all the other hawks, the use of it has been superseded. When properly tamed, and allowed to fly at large, it becomes very lively and amusing, at the same time innocent and gentle. However, as its claims to the falconer's notice are very humble, little more need be said regarding it. As a trait in its character, which appears hitherto to have escaped the notice of ornithologists, it may here be remarked, that, like several of the crow and pie tribe, this bird has a strong propensity to hide or bury its food when not inclined to eat.

Having now noticed all the falcons or long-winged hawks generally used in this country, I come next to the short-winged class, or those considered the *true* or *proper* hawks. But before pro-

ceeding with them, and lest it should be thought an omission of several of the falcon tribe which, by record at least, have been long employed in the chase, I shall here add two or three further remarks.

It would appear from old writings that a great variety of birds have been employed in falconry: that besides eagles, falcons, and hawks, others of the vulture, kite, osprey, buzzard, and owl tribes, have alike been trained to the sport. But few of the latter order having been used in this country, at least with satisfaction, it is deemed unnecessary to notice them in this volume, its object being to treat of those only which have been of most esteem and use in British hawking. But it must further appear to many that an omission has been made, not only of such as may be considered unimportant, but also of some of the falcon class, which seem to have been of great repute in Britain, viz. the sacker, lanner, and haggard. Now, these birds, it would appear, must have either become extinct, or have never existed as distinct species. Indeed, from the testimony of modern naturalists, it would seem pretty certain that the birds described under

these names have been no others than the gerfalcon or peregrine falcon of a particular age or stage of plumage; for, as has been already observed, each periodical mutation, as well as each climate they inhabit, produces always a greater or less change in the appearance of the birds, which our ancestors being ignorant of, must have led them into the error of mistaking a difference of colour for a difference in kind.

The sacer, or sacker and sackerel, then, of Linnæus and others, would appear to have been no other than the male and female of the gerfalcon at a certain age; and the lanner, lanneret, and haggard, of the same authors, to have been no other than the peregrine falcon at a certain age. Blaine seems inexplicable on this point, for, in treating of the gerfalcon, p. 670, he says, "That the sacker and sackerel of the old falconers is now well known to be the *gerfalcon* at some particular age." Then, in his notice of the sacker, p. 676, he adds, "There is every reason to consider the object so denominated to be neither more nor less than the *peregrine falcon* of a certain age."—*Encyc. of Rural Sports.*

It appears strange, if not doubtful, that our ancestors should have remained so long under the influence of a mistake so simple that neither their naturalists nor practical falconers discovered this alleged error, or the identity of these birds, as on arriving at years, all apparent differences in their plumage disappear.

CHAPTER VI.

SHORT-WINGED HAWKS.

The Goshawk.

Falco Palumbarius.

So named from the Latin *palumba*, a ring-dove or wood-pigeon, because it has been thought destructive to this bird. But this conjecture was a very erroneous one; for of all our hawks, this is the least capable of preying upon the wood-pigeon, the latter being much the swifter of the two. The term goshawk is a compound of two Saxon words, meaning *goose* and *hawk*, probably because, from

its size, it has been thought the best calculated for killing geese. This notion, however; is also an erroneous one, for, from the shyness to approach, and the elevated flight of the wild goose, it is incapable of taking that quarry.

The goshawk has long been of considerable fame as a bird of the chase. It breeds in Norway, France, Germany, and Scotland, and makes its nest sometimes in the excavations of rocks, and sometimes in trees. Montague says, "It is not uncommon in the wild and mountainous parts of Scotland; particularly it is known to breed in the forest of Rothiemurchus, and on the woody banks of the Dee; goshawks are said to be numerous in the Orkney islands." The female lays commonly four eggs of a bluish-white, streaked and spotted with brown. On the back and head this bird is of a deep brown; on the breast and belly whitish, with wavy lines or bars of black; on the tail of a dark ash colour, with four or five still darker transverse bars. The train is remarkably long in proportion to the wings, the latter seldom extending much beyond the root of the former—hence the term *short-winged hawks;* whereas in the *long-winged*, the

wings reach almost to the tip of the tail. The female measures from twenty-two to twenty-four inches in length: the male from seventeen to twenty.

The goshawk, although not unfrequently taken in Scotland, has been brought into England chiefly from Norway. Its flight is slow compared with most of the falcons; and in the wild state, it commonly takes its prey by darting through trees or bushes upon it unawares. It will sometimes station itself in some particular situation, and after patiently watching for its prey for a considerable time, will truss it on the wing. Montague, speaking of this bird, says, "If its prey take refuge, it will wait patiently on a tree or other elevation until the game, pressed by hunger, is induced to move. Colonel Thornton informs us, that he once flew a goshawk at a pheasant which retreated into cover, and the hawk following it, was for that night lost. At ten o'clock next morning, the falconer found his hawk, and as he caught her, the pheasant, seeing the enemy secured, first ran, then rose."

The excellence of this hawk consists in her abi-

lity for fur-hawking, flying hares and rabbits, for which kind of quarry she may be said to claim the second place amongst our British birds. Here, however, her fame chiefly rests, for her flight is too slow for almost the whole of our winged game; and so, for plume in general, she is inferior to most of the other hawks. For winged game in bush-hawking—hawking amongst trees and bushes—she is to be flown with most success. Assisted here by good dogs, she will take pheasants and partridges, affording excellent amusement to the sportsmen, when the long-winged hawks cannot be employed. But at birds in the champaign or open fields, although not unfrequently used for taking partridges, especially at the commencement of the season when they are feeble on the wing, she has never been of much request; and the other hawks, for these situations, have generally been preferred.

According to some authors, the goshawk appears to be of a "pettish and stubborn" disposition; but others seem to consider it mild, obedient, and, like most other hawks when properly reclaimed, faithful and affectionate. When not

properly inured to accompany, dogs, and horses (to which this bird and the sparrowhawk usually exhibit a greater degree of shyness than any other of hawks), it is apt to take scare at their appearance, and, forsaking its quarry, sit down upon the first fence or tree in the neighbourhood.

Blaine, speaking of goshawks, says, "They are all rather apt to be sluggish, and therefore should be early *made* to the attack of active prey. If this is not done, they will confine their preying to the poultry-yard. To prevent this, take care to enter these hawks to strong game, as heron, geese, ducks," &c. Now, the author here does not appear to be aware that the goshawk is never used to fly the heron, she, like the sparrowhawk, being apparently totally incapable of taking any quarry that mounts in the chase. No short-winged hawk will pursue a bird aloft: the instant the game mounts above a few feet from the earth, the hawk forsakes it.

To prevent hawks, when cast off near houses, or when living at hack, from taking to poultry, to which some are a little prone, they should be unhooded, and carried as much as possible amongst

domestic fowls, and likewise confined occasionally to the block or perch within the poultry-yard; by means of which, becoming acquainted with these feathered tribes, they by degrees regard them as associates, and thus lose the desire for injuring them.

Like the other hawks, this bird may be either taken young from the nest, or caught and reclaimed in the matured state. In the latter condition, according to Sir John Sebright and others, it is in every respect to be preferred. The learned and spirited baronet gives the following method for catching the adult bird:—A net, about eight feet deep, and of sufficient length to enclose a square of nine or ten feet, is to be suspended on upright stakes by notches cut upwards, so that it may be disengaged from them when the hawk strikes against it. This inclosure is left open at the top, and in the middle a pigeon is to be tied to the ground for a bait. The meshes of the net should not be too small, and of a colour similar to that of the surrounding objects. In this manner the bird is easily allured and captured. The method for training it will be considered in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPARROWHAWK.

Falco Nisus.

So called from the fabulous hero Nisus, who assumed the form of a hawk that he might be avenged upon Scylla for her perfidy, who had been changed by the gods into a lark: hence comes, as the story goes, a constant variance existing between these birds. But had Nisus been either a falconer or an ornithologist, before he could have hoped to taste the "sweets of revenge," he must have made to himself a pair of long wings,

for none but the long-winged hawks are a match for the lark. Had the hero, therefore, in contemplating his metamorphosis, been aware of this circumstance, we would in all probability have had him in the character of a hobby or a merlin, which birds are, of all enemies, the most formidable to the lark. Scylla, being a quarry of the mount, is to be pursued only by a hawk of the soar; and the moment the perfidious jade perceives the approach of the much-injured Nisus, to escape his long-cherished revenge, she betakes herself directly aloft; which he, on the other hand, no sooner observes, than he abandons the pursuit. Being short-winged, he will not mount after his prey.

Had the name of Nisus been given to any of the minikin falcons on the ground of determined hostility, it must have been more appropriately bestowed, they being birds of the soar.

The common name of sparrowhawk by which this bird is known, appears to be composed of two Saxon words, meaning *to spar* or *fight*, and *hawk*; or otherwise, taken from the Italian *sparàre*, to *dart*, to *tear*, &c. The latter derivation seems the

most consistent, for the bird commonly takes its prey at unawares, by darting through hedges and bushes upon it. The male of this species is named musket.

Of all our hawks except the kestrel, the sparrowhawk is the most generally distributed. Scarcely is there to be found a forest of any considerable size in the kingdom that does not produce its annual brood of sparrowhawks. Although it would appear to breed occasionally amongst the cliffs of rocks, its favourite place for nidification is a tree, not over tall, in some secret and sheltered situation. The female lays commonly five eggs of a whitish colour, interspersed with dark brown patches, and generally rears as many young.

A greater disparity of size is observable between the male and female of this genus of birds than is to be met with amongst any other of our hawk tribe. In length the male commonly measures twelve inches, and its weight varies from four and a half to six ounces. The female measures from fourteen to sixteen inches, and weighs from nine to eleven ounces.

The common appearance of the sparrowhawk is

of a dark brown on the back, which, after the first moulting, becomes tinged with a bluish-grey; on the breast and belly it is of a lightish-brown, beautifully speckled with transverse markings of a darker brown; the head is nearly of the same colour with the back, except of a lightish-grey over the arch of each eye, and at its junction with the neck a few whitish feathers are seen almost crossing it; the eyes are light-yellow, with a small dark-brown centre or pupil, much resembling those of the common buzzard; nor have they any of that jetty gloss which gives a distinguishing mark and lustre to the eye of the falcons; its wings bear nearly the same proportion to the tail with those of the goshawk, which bird it may be said to be in miniature.

As a bird of the chase, the sparrowhawk has maintained a considerable reputation. For a short distance its flight is rapid in the extreme; and it will take partridges, magpies, landrails, water-hens, and other smaller quarry, in a manner by no means inferior to some of the falcons. It gets sooner upon the wing, or darts off the fist with more rapidity than the falcons, and is therefore better suited for

bush-hawking. It ought, however, to be remembered, that whilst the short-winged hawk gets sooner in possession of its speed than the long-winged, it also much sooner loses it, and is in consequence, as above stated, best qualified for a short flight.

In woody situations, the sparrowhawk and goshawk may be used in company with the peregrine or gerfalcon, affording much of both additional interest and success to the sport. When the quarry has taken to a wood pursued by the falcon, it will often baffle both men and dogs to again drive it out, taking itself always from one tree or bush to another as they press upon it. To remedy this, let the short-winged hawk be cast off at the fugitive in the cover, which, being equally dexterous at passing through the bushes, will soon either capture or drive it out to be taken by the falcon. The falcon, during the time of these movements, is to be either kept soaring over the scene, or taken down and held in readiness to fly out of the hood, should the game eventually leave the cover. Sport of this kind, however, can be practised only where the trees are not very dense or covered with foliage.

An opinion is generally entertained amongst falconers that the sparrowhawk is more unmanageable and uncertain in its movements in the field than the falcons; but any difference in this respect, I am inclined to believe, is owing more to the system of training or working it, than to any untowardness in the nature of the bird. The method commonly pursued of training the short-winged hawks to the *fist* only, and not to the *lure* like the long-winged, is, I am convinced, the sole cause of this defect—a practice causing much unnecessary labour to both the falconer and to the bird itself, which has the effect of begetting a dread or aversion in the hawk towards its keeper, rather than that of inspiring it with affection and obedience. It is only when the sparrowhawk or goshawk is stung with the extreme of hunger that it will come to the hand, and then often not without a waste of time, and much coaxing or manœuvring has been employed. Now, if trained like the falcons to the lure, it will obey, and fly to that instrument the instant it is thrown out to it, and will suffer itself to be taken up and replaced upon the fist with the same facility.

It is a common opinion amongst falconers that all our birds of the chase are to be preferred captured in the adult state, after having for some time preyed for themselves, to that of being taken young from the nest: nor is the one under consideration here an exception. Sir John Sebright appears decidedly of this opinion respecting the sparrowhawk. The honourable baronet once took a partridge with an old sparrowhawk of his own breaking on the tenth day after it had been captured wild in the wood.

The male of the sparrowhawk, like that of the merlin and hobby, being too small or light mettle for killing game, has never been of much request amongst falconers. When properly trained, however, it is capable of affording much excellent pastime with small birds, as blackbirds, thrushes, chaffinches, sparrows; and it may be recommended to the notice of gentlemen having gardens or orchards subject to the depredations of these tiny intruders. For this purpose it is superior to every other hawk, not even excepting the female, being smaller and quicker at darting through the bushes. In the garden it is to be managed as in the field,

regularly flown off the hand; because, if permitted to range at large preying for itself, it will soon become wild, and leave the premises. If, however, the sport of hunting down the offenders be of less consideration than the preservation of the fruit, by shortening his flight—that is, removing with a pair of scissors the extreme end of one or both pinions, so as to prevent him preying entirely for himself, but not to deprive him of the power of flying from tree to tree in pursuit of the feathered trespassers—he may be stationed at liberty in the garden, and being duly fed when required, will remain therein long enough, ridding it of its unwelcome visitors.

Before dismissing Nisus, I must present the reader with the following anecdote, which, although no recommendation to the bird, tends materially to shew him what the faithless Scylla may expect for her rape of the yellow lock, should she ever fall under the mercy of her enemy. The circumstance occurred, strange to say, upon the very day I was engaged in penning my notice of this bird.

An esteemed friend, with whom I happened to

be then spending a few days, having a cast of young sparrowhawks, one of which living at hack, the other leashed to the block, on the green sward fronting the house; they were male and female belonging to the same brood. The female, being the one at liberty, attacked the male, and after a desperate conflict, as the ground indicated, succeeded in killing and eating a considerable portion of him. On the gentleman and myself happening to step to the window, we discovered her busily engaged in devouring her unfortunate brother. What rendered this more strange still, the female had refused food from her master only an hour or so previous to the committing of this outrage.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RAVEN.

Corvus Corax.

FORMERLY this oracular bird—this high-priest of Jupiter—this pope of the sable robes, and messenger of the Fates—so honoured for his wisdom, so feared for his powers—was much more abundant in this country than it is at the present day. Independent of the regard our ancestors had for the birds that inhabited their lands and forests, the life of the raven was considered secure against injury through a different means. A supernatural

agency with which it was supposed to be endowed, whereby its knowledge of futurity, and influence upon the destinies of mankind, spread a sacred and dreaded halo around its person, which few had the temerity to violate. The Latins held this bird in no less awe and veneration, as appears from the following lines, translated from an imperfect fragment of Appius Vindemiator;—

O raven, croaking on the tree,
Woe to the man that injures thee!
Thou brought'st the persecuted food,—
Friend of the prophet, child of good,
Maligned but little understood.
* * * *
Woe to the man that harmeth thee!
Childless he is, or childless he shall be!

The captive finch in borrow'd lays,
Poor slave may chaunt his jailor's praise;
The starling utter praise or spite,—
An all obedient parasite;
But thou,
Rough son of rock, with swarthy brow,
No smooth-tongued sycophant art thou!
Black is thy plumage, fair thy heart,
Thy voice still makes the murderer start—
Start from his couch with streaming brow,
—No smooth-tongued flatterer art thou.

The lordly tenant of the wild,
The lion, nature's fiercest child,
Savage, blood-thirsty though he be,
The lion quails at sight of thee.
Is this the tyrant of the plain?
The slaughterer amongst the slain?
He lies, dire bird, overcome by thee,
In sightless, helpless majesty.

When o'er thy head the Gaul's sword waving high
Bade thee (hard choice) to live a slave or die,
The feathered warrior, sent by Jove's decree,
Perched, tribune, on thy helm, and gave thee victory.

Cervantes tells us that for many centuries after the wise king Arthur left our uneasy throne, no Englishman would kill a raven, it being a current belief that this monarch was changed into a raven by witchcraft; and that after a certain time he would again recover the human form and retake possession of his sceptre; consequently love and loyalty to their metamorphosed prince must have induced every true Englishman to protect the life of the bird.

Although I can never bring myself into a belief of that part of his majesty's prediction which promised his return to resume the English government—that he could ever have patience to endure for an hour the clamourings of our senators, after having been so long accustomed to the easier task of governing a kingdom of crows and pies, and listening to their sensible and intelligent speeches—yet I cannot withhold my credit from that part of the story which relates to his transformation; for, in truth, I can never look in the face of this mo-

narch of crows without perceiving in it, if not Arthur's very image, at least something greater and wiser than common people. He wears the very mouth and eye of wisdom; and his high and dignified gait, his lofty and imperious voice, and his statesman-like orations, give him a most kingly appearance.

Had the enlightened world but seen, with me, a day or two since, one of my friend Will Waverley's tame ravens addressing himself to a large assemblage of turkeys, geese, ducks, and other animals of various orders and dimensions which he had gathered around him,—it never more would have doubted the physical truth of the tradition; nay, I much question whether it would not have imagined itself absolutely within the walls of St. Stephens. The sable monarch was mounted upon a dog-kennel, and haranguing his auditors most emphatically; indeed, so much so, that an incorrigible bully of a turkey-cock—the O'Connell of the poultry-yard—was quite affected by it. Nor did this belligerent gentleman attempt more than once to break upon the spell-bound silence of the listeners, which was considered very remarkable;

but it was thought to be owing to a signal discomfiture his first "gobble, gobble" met with by a volley of hisses from the geese, who were looking marvelously grave on the occasion. Amidst this promiscuous assemblage, too, might be seen conspicuously the grizzled face of an aged ass, in company with a prating colt. It seemed to be drinking in at its long ears the royal accents with a countenance of dreamy deliciousness; nor could his common companion, the colt, help betimes betraying unwonted gravity of face. Indeed, at the conclusion of the address it were hard to judge which of the auditors went away most substantially edified.

The raven is a bird of perhaps the widest distribution of any of the crow or pie tribe. It is an inhabitant of the colder, as well as of the warmer regions, and is thought to be the only bird whose plumage is not influenced by climate. Of the appearance of the raven nothing here need be said: his jetty plumage, so sung by the poets, and his beautiful symmetry of parts, are already too familiar to every person to require further description. It breeds commonly in rocks, although, ac-

cording to the learned and spirited Waterton, and other naturalists, sometimes upon trees. It lays five eggs, of a darkish grey-green colour, and generally rears as many young. This bird is said to live to a great age; Hesiod asserts that it will live nine times as long as a man, which according to computation, will be 830 years.

Of the supposed variety of the raven little here can be said. Although this family of birds, like everything else in nature, is not to be without its *lusus naturæ*, still there is no satisfactory ground afforded us for establishing belief in the alleged variety of species. Goldsmith informs us that all the white ravens he had seen he believed had been whitened by art.

Never was Mercury more highly honoured by the gods, than has the raven been by every witch, warlock, astrologer, necromancer, &c., since the days of the veritable witch of Endor down to the last of her order that ever crossed a broomstick on English soil. Indeed he appears to have been not unfrequently employed in the service of the gods. For my own part, although I have always looked upon him as a gentleman of rather an

equivocal profession, dealing much in secrets, mysteries, and "deeds without a name," yet he has ever appeared to me a useful intelligencer in this short-sighted world, a sort of deputy Mercury or side post, plying between this speck of earth and the high-road to Jupiter's own Temple. Without him, what would become of us? Without his bodings or warnings our flocks and herds must often inevitably perish in the storm, and our travellers be constantly overtaken and lost by unexpected tempests and torrents; with thousands of other accidents and mishaps besides. There is not a species of storm, from the sky-rending thunder and lightning down to the *Scotch mist*, that the raven cannot inform us of the moment it is cradled,

> "Why hastes the shepherd to the wold?
> Why speed his flocks into the fold?
> Why neigh my steeds, my oxen leap?
> Why low my kine, why bleat my sheep?
> Why cease the songsters of the grove?
> What intercepts their tales of love?
> 'Tis the raven's croak, prophetic and loud;
> 'Tis the herald of Jove on his thunder-cloud;
> 'Tis a mystic seer in a raven's form;
> 'Tis the warner's voice 'gainst the coming storm."

As a bird of the chase in this country the raven does not appear to have been much used.

For this reason I would have considered it unnecessary to notice it in this work; but the experience of a friend or two, and my own, of its aptitude for the sport, and of the excellent diversion it is capable of affording in the field, induce me to recommend it to the notice of sportsmen. In some parts of the globe it seems to have acquired considerable repute in the field, where it is used for hunting birds of slow and heavy flight, besides hares, rabbits, and other animals. In Britain, where the greater portion of our winged game will be found to be too swift for him, he is to be chiefly and most successfully flown at hares and rabbits. At the hare a cast ought always to be flown together.

The docile nature of this bird renders it capable of being easily tutored for the office of hawking. Goldsmith says that the raven may be taught to speak, sing, or fetch and carry like a spaniel. In the wild state he is shy and jealous of approach; domesticated, however, he courts society often at the peril of his safety. He is remarkably affectionate to men or animals, though equally partial in his attachments. He is seldom to be found at

rest, always full of life and humour, and either engaged in some secret business of mighty importance, or playing off his pranks, and amusing himself at the expense of some other animal. He possesses a singular power and facility in dilating or distending his throat with air. Unlike most other animals, this bird, once paired, seldom deserts his mate, but adheres faithfully to her throughout the year. Notwithstanding this attachment, however, to his spouse while alive, he soon forgets her when dead; and before the third or fourth day of his widowhod has passed away, he generally has her place supplied by another companion.

It would appear that the raven has a peculiar predilection for the goose and bodkin. This strange propensity seems as old as the days of Pliny, who informs us that one which was kept in the Temple of Castor used to visit the shop of a tailor, who received its visits with kindness and delight. An exemplification of this passion occurred hard by, not many months ago. A tame one, belonging to a respected neighbour, bethought himself of paying his addresses to this "master of the boards" of a neighbouring village; but it is

said seasons change, lovers change, men change, and so tailors change too, it appears; for instead of affording his visitor the welcome reception of old, the village tailor viewing the stranger rather as an intruder, armed himself with his shears, and with this terrible weapon gasping open before him, ready to shear all asunder, rushed up to the enemy as dauntlessly as ever did the valorous Quixote to a windmill. Kingdoms will resolve, soldiers will fight, and tailors will clip, so was the raven shorn of its wings, and taken captive by the valiant knight of the thimble. Unlike, however, his contemporary hero of Waterloo, the triumphant son of the goose and bodkin was not fated to enjoy the fruits of his conquest in wealth and peace,—was not to sit folded up like a frog towering on the summit of his pride (the kitchen table) and snapping his shears in lordly independence down on the lowly world around him—for, with sorrow be it spoken, that very yawn of the deadly weapon—that very close of its iron jaws which clipped the bird of its wings —clipped off for ever one of his customers—the owner of the bird.

Like every other genus of the different birds

employed in the chase, the male and female raven, in the language of falconry, are to be distinguished from each other by particular names. The name of the female is *Sib*, doubtless a contraction of the word *sybil*, meaning, in ancient mythology, a woman endowed with the spirit of prophecy, a foreteller of future events. The male is styled the *king*, most probably so called after the bewitched king Arthur. He is likewise often named Ralph, or, according to Smollet, Ralpho, in memory, perhaps, of the incomparable fellow adventurer of Hudibras, or some of his progenitors.

The raven, though not belonging to the falcon class of birds, is nevertheless to be ranked amongst the long-winged order of hawks. But although thus classed, it appears a question whether he is to be most successfully managed and flown upon the principles of the long or short-winged birds. No proper directions, no fixed rules, are to be met with in books upon this point, consequently each falconer considers himself entitled to make a plan of his own, and believe it better than that of his neighbour. Some will have him a hawk of the fist, and manage him accordingly; others one of the soar.

Marshalling in the ranks of these disputants is to be seen the distinguishable E—— R——, a personage vastly experienced in the matter. It is the opinion of this favoured son of the lure that the raven never can be brought to wait-on in the air; that whenever it is cast off before the quarry be put up, it immediately sits down and croaks at the falconer. On the opposite side of the case, and conspicuous in the van, is to be found the learned T—— C——, a wight as profoundly skilled in all secret lore as the raven himself. This irrefragible champion maintains that the raven never was intended by nature for a bird of the fist, because it is gifted with long wings, and no long-winged bird will fly so well off the fist as from the mounty; that it can be brought to wait-on like any falcon; that it is positively a bird of the soar; and to put the question for ever to rest, he quotes from some author the words *corvus ascensus*, which he informed me was Latin, and meant a soaring raven or crow of the soar. As the words of the learned are ever to be revered, I shall subscribe myself of the latter opinion, believing likewise, *ex parte*, that the bird may be flown more easily and successfully from the hand.

The training of the raven differs little in mode from that of the hawks. He may be either hooded or not. When not hooded he is to be allowed the liberty of a room, and moderately fed; when on the contrary he is to be made to the hood, he is to be kept to the block, and weathered like the hawks. Bells and jesses are to be put upon his legs, and he is to be properly made to the lure. He is to be taught to pursue game in the field by premonitory lessons upon stuffed skins, with meat attached to them, as directed for managing the hawks.

Perhaps no being under the sun, whether in black, blue, or scarlet robes, could furnish a more extensive or marvellous field for some pens, than the life and history of the raven. Indeed when we reflect upon the present state of things—upon how many thirsty pens are at this moment lying gasping for drink; how many worn into the quick in writing lives which were never before heard of, and which nobody cares about?—how many authors are laid idle for want of matter?—how many are searching amongst the records of the dead and living for illustrious names to build

volumes upon?—and how many are daily and impatiently waiting for the knell of their bespoken heroes, that is to summon them to their desks?—how hard up for heroes some of our biographers must be?—what a chaste and novel brace of octavos a biography of the raven would make—we are astonished that his "portrait, life, and anecdotes," have not figured in our market long before this.—What a treasure for a C——! What a hero for a Laureat!

The innumerable anecdotes, wonderful dealings and doings of this bird with which history, song, and tradition abound, would furnish materials for a very amusing work.

CHAPTER IX.

EYESSES.

HAVING made a few brief notices of the various birds used in the chase in this country, the art of managing and training them is now to be considered; but before entering upon this part of our subject, it may not be improper to observe, that should the sketch given of the different birds appear too slight, I beg to remark, that the nice and distinguishing marks of the naturalist, or what are styled "scientific descriptions," have been avoided

here as seeming uncalled for, and savouring too much of the pedant for the sportsman.

The term eyess or eyass is derived from the German *ey*, an egg. Eyrie appears to be derived from the same source, signifying the place where the eggs are deposited; so it follows that all young hawks taken from the nest are styled eyesses.

Young hawks of every kind, before being taken, should be allowed to remain in the eyrie as long as they can safely be trusted; for however kindly fostered by the hand of man, they never make such rapid progress, or fledge with such facility, as when under the care of the parent birds. The most proper time, then, for removing them, is when they first begin to flap their wings over the edge of the nest, which they usually do for some time before attempting to leave it. Some falconers prefer them after they have left the nest, while perching on the rocks or trees in its vicinity; but in this state, having become quite wild, they are apt, when being captured, to struggle so as greatly to endanger their feathers; and also, when placed at hack, they are very liable to betake themselves off. But although the fledged state may be enti-

tled to the preference, still, when circumstances do not favour the procuring of them in this condition, when there is the chance of being anticipated by any other person at the nest, and inconvenience or hazard in revisiting it, they may be taken even before any feathers have appeared; also, when they are to be conveyed to any considerable distance, they should be procured before their feathers are so far grown as to be in danger of being broken by the journey.

As soon as the eyesses are removed from the nest, a fresh killed bird or a piece of lean beef or mutton should be offered them; and if intended for a long journey, they ought to have two hearty meals every day. On arriving at their destination, the first step to be taken is to put them into a box containing a little soft hay, to keep them from resting upon the boards. This has to be more particularly attended to if the birds be in an unfledged state. The box ought to be of size sufficient to allow them free room to turn or even move about. If the weather be cold or stormy, they must be kept within doors until nearly feathered; but if fine, the box containing them is to

be securely placed upon its side, in some sheltered situation, four or five feet from the ground, against a wall or tree, with the cover or lid projecting forward, and sufficiently supported, to serve as a sort of platform for the birds to move about upon. Care must be taken, however, that the box be not placed in a situation exposed to a hot sun without affording a shade to the birds. The birds are always to be taken in at night, and that with as little handling as possible. Sir John Sebright recommends a hamper, lined with straw in the bottom, for this purpose; but the box being warmer and better fitted for protecting them from rain, and the hay being softer for their tender and naked bellies, corresponding more with the smooth and feathery interior of the eyrie, are to be preferred. Mr. Huber recommends a cask, staved out in one end, and placed upon its side.

The next consideration respecting the treatment of the young hawks is to have them fed plentifully twice a-day upon fresh beef or mutton, the fat and membraneous parts of which being rejected. This food is to be given from the hand, cut into small pieces. For the purpose of changing their diet,

and also of giving them *castings*, warm or fresh killed birds, with their feathers upon them, should be given at least three times a-week, and oftener if convenient. A little raw egg may be occasionally given along with the meat during the growth of their feathers. When this is purposed, the beef or mutton is to be chopped into a very fine mass of mince-meat, into which the egg, having been previously beaten up as for a pudding, is to be poured, and so mixed with it as to become to the birds imperceptible. During the time of feeding, and always as the falconer approaches the birds for this purpose, he ought to whistle and talk to them, by means of which they become familiar with his voice, and soon begin to know and evince an attachment towards him. Punctuality to the hour of feeding should be strictly attended to, because if, during the growth of their feathers, they be allowed to fast too long, or even be stinted in their meals, they become subject to *hunger-traces*, a complaint produced from a deficiency of nourishment, and affecting the feathers in a peculiar manner. Sir John Sebright describes it as follows:—"This defect, when strongly marked,

may be seen in some degree in every feather of the body; but it is especially observable on the expanded wings or tail, in a line crossing all the feathers. On the shaft of each feather the mark may not only be seen, but felt, as a ridge slightly projecting. It may also be seen as a line of imperfection across the web of every feather, neatly marked as if a razor had been lightly passed across the wing." The consequence of hunger-traces is commonly a breaking through of the shaft of the feathers at the blemished part.

Young hawks should never be handled; but as soon as they are capable of flying to the falconer, or of perching upon his fist, they ought by all means to be encouraged to do so. Their growth, under proper treatment, is very rapid; but deprived of this, neither their strength nor power of wing ever arrive at a full developement. Their first attempt to fly is generally from the box to the nearest tree or wall in its vicinity. Having tried their wings, however, a few times successfully, they soon begin to lengthen their flight, and survey the neighbourhood.

Advanced thus far, they now attain the rank of

hack-hawks, which will form the subject of another chapter. The foregoing remarks, it may be observed, are alike applicable to the long and short-winged hawks.

CHAPTER X.

OF HACK-HAWKS.

It has already been remarked, that hawks, when allowed to fly at liberty in a tame or domesticated state, are termed by falconers *hack-hawks*, or hawks living at *hack*. Old as well as young hawks, even after having killed game for years, under certain circumstances may be permitted to live at hack; but this liberty, it must be remembered, is to be entrusted only with such as have been originally procured from the nest.

All eyesses, previous to being entered to the train, ought to fly at hack for a few days, or as long as they can be trusted with safety; for such liberty, as they advance to maturity, is highly conducive to their strength and speed. Before entering into this hack stage, however, bells and jesses ought to be attached to their legs, to distinguish them to strangers from wild hawks. Also care should be taken to inform such persons as live in the neighbourhood of the presence of the hawks, lest from ignorance they should molest or shoot them.

Young hawks, as soon as they begin to fly, commonly evince a strong desire to bathe; accordingly a vessel containing pure water should be duly placed near to their perch or feeding-place twice or thrice a-week, taking care to have it immediately removed after the birds have washed. Should this practice be omitted, they are apt to range abroad in quest of some pool or stream, which not only exposes them to the danger of being destroyed, but also allows them to imbibe bad habits. All that now requires to be done with the hack-hawk, until she be taken up for training,

is to feed her regularly at a certain hour and place. Sir John Sebright says—"The meat may be either cut into small pieces, and given to them on a plate, or in large pieces, so fastened to the ground as to prevent them from flying away with it; and by thus using them to feed near the falconer, they will be less disposed to carry and fly away with the game, a fault to which all hawks are more or less inclined, and which is therefore to be guarded against by every possible precaution." Here I beg leave to differ from this most respectable author. Instead of feeding by either of the ways described by him, it will be found by far the better method to accustom them to come regularly to the fist to be fed, by which means they neither become so wild nor so shy to be taken. Their food should consist of either a whole bird or a solid piece of meat, and should be given to them tied upon the lure *on the fist*, or firmly held in the falconer's left hand to prevent them from flying off with it, whilst his right hand ought to be employed in assisting the hawks to deplume or pull it asunder. Adhering to this course, hawks, particularly those of the larger order, will become

so fond of the falconer's presence that they will not only not break upon the quarry until he approach to assist them, but they will scarcely feed in his absence, which has the effect both of curing them of the propensity to carrying, and of preventing them from injuring their feathers upon the ground, a fault to which some are very prone, from a desire to cover or guard their food, by spreading their wings and tail around it. For this last reason alone, hawks should be fed as little as possible upon the ground. The exercise of pulling, when feeding, upon a large piece of meat or bird, too, is highly conducive to the strength of the hawk.

Hack-hawks, as they arrive at maturity, especially if not regularly fed, soon begin to shew an inclination to prey for themselves, which is the falconer's signal for taking them up, *id est*, commencing their training, and confining them to the block. If, however, before being taken up, they should become shy, or absent themselves for a day or two, the first opportunity of securing them is to be embraced. A bird or a piece of meat is to be fastened to the ground in the usual feeding-

place, with a small net, so arranged as to be easily drawn, by means of a long string, over the birds when they come to feed. Springs placed around the meat, or a *slip-knot*, with a long string attached to it, by which the noose may be gently drawn about the legs of the hawks when standing upon their food, have also been employed. But as none of these means can be used without endangering their feathers, the birds should always be taken up before becoming so wild.

When it is wished that hawks should remain long at hack, to prevent them from preying for themselves or extending their flight too far from home, leaden or other weighty bells should be attached to their legs. By means of such weights, rendering them unable to overtake their quarry, eyesses, old or young, may be kept at hack for any length of time, provided they be duly fed. Whenever hawks in a confined state appear to be in ill health, by putting on hack-bells they may be turned out to hack at any age or season of the year.

Hawks living in this state of liberty should be encouraged as much as possible to roost within doors. It has already been observed, that those

in the unsummed state, before being able to fly at large, are always to be taken in at night: so also ought the hack-hawks; but as the latter are often inclined to choose a roosting-place for themselves in some elevated situation out of doors, this cannot always be done. They ought, however, to be brought under cover if possible—not that they are liable to receive injury from midnight exposure, but because they are apt to betake themselves off for good and all. The most proper place is a room or office-house containing convenient perches, with an open window, at which the hawks are allowed to pass out and in at pleasure. In such place the birds should be regularly fed once a day, observing always to whistle or call them in at the window.

It matters little what sound or signal be employed in calling or luring hawks. It is, however, to be remembered, that whatever they have been trained or accustomed to, that will they most promptly obey. The common whistle carried by sportsmen for calling their dogs makes an excellent call for hawks likewise; but it must be sparingly used, and that only when they are to be summoned from a distance, or when being cast off.

This instrument does not appear to have been formerly employed for this purpose, falconers in general using only their voice and the lure; but from its peculiar sound, and being heard at a considerable distance, it will be found to be of great utility. To make the hawks familiar with, and attentive to it, the falconer should always give a loud whistle or two upon it as he approaches to feed them. This has an excellent effect, and ought to be practised with all hawks, young or old, within or without doors.

CHAPTER XI.

APPARATUS USED IN FALCONRY.

Before the falconer commences with the tuition of his hawks, he ought to provide himself with all the furniture and apparatus necessary to the purpose; which articles shall now be briefly noticed.

Hoods.—There are two kinds of hoods, the proper hood and the *rufter* hood. They differ but little from each other, both having a slit behind, with leathern ties or braces for tightening or

slackening them as occasion may require; and an aperture in front through which the beak of the bird is to pass. The difference of the two is chiefly this: the rufter is without a plume, and consists entirely of leather, and that commonly of a lighter sort. The rufter hood is seldom used but when hawks are first caught in the adult state. Of the proper hood, any further description here is unnecessary. Great care must be taken that the hoods be properly fitted to the heads of the birds, and so constructed as to prevent all pressure or injury from their eyes.

Blaine, in treating of hoods, p. 697, *Enc R. S.* entertains the eye with a wood-cut as well as a verbal description of them; but notwithstanding the respect due to this author as a falconer in theory, or a compiler of excellent information upon sports in general, his pen here, as also in several minor points elsewhere, is very much at fault. Indeed, so much so, that in his description he has entirely mistaken the proper hood for the rufter-hood, the *post hoc* for the *propter hoc*, which leaves his readers very much in doubt of his know-

ledge of the one from the other; and reminds them of the old adage, "He? he can't tell a hawk from a handsaw," (hernshaw.) It need scarcely be added, that the use of hoods is to blind the hawks to prevent them from baiting.

JESSES.—These are small slips of leather, of from four to six inches in length, and from a quarter to half an inch in width, one end of which is to be fastened round the leg of the hawk, while the other, which contains a short slit at a little distance from the extreme end, is to be joined by a ring or swivel to the leash. One jess, of course, is used upon each leg.

LEASH.—This is a narrow thong of leather, three or four feet in length, having a knot or button on the one end, to prevent it from passing through the ring of the swivel. Its use is to confine the hawk to the block, or to the hand of the falconer when carried.

BELLS.—Hawk-bells are of a circular form, of from a quarter to a full inch in diameter, made of

brass or silver; and are attached, one to each leg of the bird, by means of short slips of leather termed *bewits*. The use of bells is to lead the falconer by their sound to the hawk when in a wood or out of his sight. Leaden bells, with their use, have been noticed elsewhere.

Creance.—This is a long string or cord, sometimes attached to the end of the leash of the hawk, at other times, during initiatory lessons, to the legs of the captured quarry.

Brail.—The brail is a thong of soft leather, containing a longitudinal slit of sufficient length to admit the pinion-joint of the hawk. Its use is to prevent the hawk from using its wings, and is thus applied:—The pinion-joint is introduced into the slit; after which the loose or extreme end of the thong is passed backwards under the wing, and tied to the other end above it.

Mayles.—These are narrow bags of porous elastic cloth, resembling the leg of a stocking, into which the birds are thrust when first captured, and

in which they are kept in a perfectly quiescent state. They are used chiefly by hawk-catchers.

LURE.—Lures formerly were of various materials and construction; but the most common are made of iron, after the form of a horse-shoe. In the centre of the bend a hole is made, through which the strap, by which the instrument is carried and swung in the air, is passed. A ring was formerly fixed in this hole; but as the hawks, in darting upon the lure, are apt to hurt themselves against such a projection, it ought not to be applied. The lure should be of sufficient weight to prevent the hawks from flying off with it, and properly covered with thick leather. Feathers on the wings of birds, termed the *drawer*, are tied upon it, and meat also whenever the lure is to be used. The lure is a most essential instrument in the art of falconry. It may be said to be to the falconer what the helm of the ship is to the mariner, because it is by the signals made by it alone that the movements of the bird in the air are controlled.

CADGE OR CAGE.—This is a frame upon which a number of hawks together are usually carried into the field, or from place to place. It is well described by Sir John Sebright. "The cage," observes the baronet, "is an oblong frame, four feet six inches long, and two feet wide, made of light wood; the sides and ends are of a proper size for hawks to stand upon, and a little wadded that it may not injure their feet. It is supported, when placed on the ground, by four legs about a foot long. Slight rods of hazel are fixed across each end to prevent the hawks from falling on the inside when they bait. A space of about twenty inches in length is left in the middle of the cage, in which the falconer places himself, carrying it by two straps that pass over his shoulders. The hawks are tied upon a cage as upon a perch, and by this contrivance many may be carried by one man."

BLOCK.—This is a solid piece of wood, of from ten to fifteen inches high, seven or eight in diameter at the top, and so much wider at the bottom as to prevent it from overturning. It is to

be perfectly round and well smoothed, that no rough edges or projections may be upon it to hurt the feathers of the hawk. A small staple is to be driven into the centre of the upper end of it, to which the leash, or food occasionally, is to be tied. But it must be observed that smaller blocks are used for the smaller hawks; the above are the dimensions of such as are used for the large falcons.

Bathing Vessel.—This is commonly made of wood, in the form of a kit, but shallow and wide. Its depth should be six or eight inches, and its width from three to four feet.

Glove.—The falconer's glove may be made of any thick and pliable leather, so that the talons of the hawk may not pass through it to wound the hand. It ought to extend as far up the arm as to reach midway between the elbow and wrist-joints.

Bow Net.—This engine is employed chiefly for capturing the large and long-winged hawks.

Blaine quotes a minute description of it, and of the manner of using it, which I shall take the liberty inserting at full length, as it may perhaps be in request by some.

"This engine consists of a bow made of stout wood or iron, forming a semi-oval; each end of the bow is bent into an eye, and works backwards and forwards when pulled by the falconer, after the following manner: two iron pins are thrust into the ground at four feet distance from each other, the heads of which, being likewise turned into an eye, form, with the extremities of the bow, hinges at those parts. An oval net is prepared, measuring five feet long from end to end, and four feet wide at the conjugate line,—an imaginary line passing from one extremity of the bow to the other as it lies flat upon the ground; half of this net is staked down, at its circumference, to the ground with pegs; the other half is sewn on to the bow. The net should be verged all round with a stout cord; the meshes must be two inches and a quarter square, so as admit the head and neck of the falcon passing through when the bird is under the net; the net-work to be dyed dark brown or green.

When the engine is set, the bow, and with it the half of the netting, being reflected back on itself, a lure of raw meat, or a live bird, is staked down to the ground within the range of the fall of the net. The falcon pouncing on the lure, the fowler, who lies in ambush at a distance, with a nimble jerk twitches over the bow and leaf of the net, by means of a long string attached to the circumference of the former.

"When the bow and pegs are made of wood, the pegs have tenons on their heads, which fit into corresponding mortices cut into the extremities of the bow; a pin is then run through them to keep all in place, at the same time allowing the joints free motion. Whether the apparatus be made of iron or wood, in either case these parts should be painted a dark colour, and may be farther concealed by having loose grass, weeds, and like rubbish thrown over the engine."

According to this author, the one of iron is to be preferred, because it is more easily pulled over, less likely to break, more portable, and being less bulky, it is less discernible.

The trap commonly employed for catching the small and short-winged hawks has already been described in the chapter upon the goshawk.

CHAPTER XII.

TRAINING OF EYESS FALCONS.

The gerfalcon and peregrine falcon being treated in all the essentials of the art expressly alike, the following observations are intended for both.

When the falcon is intended to be put under training, a hood is to be put on immediately after being taken up; and if the hack bells have been used, they are now to be removed, and the proper

ones applied. Jesses are next to be put on, if this has not already been done, and to the loose ends of which, by means of a swivel or two small rings, the leash is to be joined. Thus dressed, she is now to be placed upon the block, and attentively watched by the falconer until she has become a little reconciled to her new situation. Should she struggle off the block, as all hawks at first are liable to do, care must be taken to gently replace her. She ought not to have much food in her crop when these operations are being performed.

After being allowed to remain on the block undisturbed for a few hours, she is next to be placed on the falconer's left hand,* with her head turned

* Hawks ought always to be carried upon the left hand, except when being borne from place to place upon the cadge. This will perhaps appear discordant with the notions some individuals may have formed upon the point, from references made to some of our pictorial hawking pieces. It is true we not unfrequently meet with equestrian figures, male and female, with the hawk carried upon the right hand, but, as every practical falconer knows, nothing can be more absurd. It may, however, be still advanced that it would appear to have been not uncommon even amongst our ancestors. As far as pictures or engravings, go it would seem not to have been unusual but I doubt much that it was so with the originals; that it has not at first been the design of some aspirant to originality, like Dick Tinto in the "Bride of Lammermoor," who, happily availing himself of the licence of his art, painted upon the village sign of Langdirdum, a horse with five legs. Our ancestors were not so ill-skilled in the niceties of falconry, nor so inexperienced in equestrian exercise, as not to know that they could have no control over either the hawk or horse, with the former upon the right hand. If, for example, the bird, sitting upon the right hand, should throw off her hood, which not unfrequently occurs, how is

inwards; and being kindly spoken to, and occasionally stroked gently upon the breast with a feather or the fore-finger, is to be carried about during the greater part of the day. The hand, of course, is to be protected from the talons by means of a thick and proper glove. If she be of a hot and stubborn temper, the brail may be put on, but must not remain above two or three days, lest it should affect the joints of the wings. When she is

she to be re-hooded? Not until she has been transferred to the other hand, for no experienced falconer would attempt to hood a hawk with his left hand; nor can he, under such circumstances, properly liberate the hawk from her harness when about to be cast off. It is therefore an error in falconry, and I must repeat my doubt that it ever was committed by a falconer at all, or by any but a novice in the art. Being an error in falconry, it must, by consequence, be regarded as nothing less in a painting, representing what if, never ought to be committed. In a recent hawking piece, by Landseer, much, and not undeservedly praised by the public, a similar, if not a still more egregious fault has been committed. Two hawks are represented on the print returning from their mounty (descending from aloft to the earth) with a heron, one of which binding to her game, the other about to close with it also, while a falconer, in a most conspicuous position, is engaged in luring the birds. Now it is quite out of place; in fact it is burlesquing falconry, to exhibit the lure while the hawks are either in pursuit of, or are any way engaged with the quarry. Independent of being bad policy on the part of the falconer, a vain attempt to draw the hawks from their prey, it would, if even successful, have the effect of spoiling the birds, and allowing the game to escape. The lure is never shown under such circumstances. This may have been done for effect, so may have Dick Tinto's five legged horse, but they are false representations of what the artisans profess to pourtray, namely, a particular animal and a certain scene in a hawking field. While artists would give us faithful representations of objects or scenes, they should endeavour to copy from originals as perfect and natural in their kind as possible. When we are to have a scene of hawking let it be hawking in perfection, not a monstrosity of it.

to be fed the hood must be taken off, and this, for the first time or two—especially if she be very wild—is recommended to be done at night, with the light of a candle held a little distance from her. After the second or third day, however, she may always be fed in day light. Indeed, few eyesses require much of candle light exercise; and most of them after the first night may be allowed to remain during the night with their heads uncovered, provided they be hooded early in the morning.

After the falcon has become a little reconciled, and acquainted with being carried upon the fist, the falconer begins, and gradually increases the operation of hooding and unhooding her, until she becomes so inured to it as to suffer the hood to be put off or on without offering the least resistance. This is called *braking*, or *making her to the hood*. When hawks are very stubborn during this hooding process, in order to make them stand the more quietly, the brail is frequently applied. As another remedy, water is recommended to be dropped upon their backs from a whisp of straw or hay, until they be completely drenched; but care

must be taken to have them thoroughly dried in the sun, or by the fire, immediately afterwards. When, however, they begin to receive the hood steadily, they ought to be encouraged, by having a few morsels of meat immediately after it has been put on; and they may now, also, at times, be placed unhooded upon the block, and allowed to pull at a fleshless stump or pinion.

To hood a hawk properly is a very nice point, requiring no small portion of manual dexterity, which can only be acquired by care and practice. The hood, sufficiently slackened readily to admit the head of the bird, is to be taken between the thumb and two fore-fingers of the right hand, by the plume, with the third and fourth resting upon the slit posteriorly, in order to depress it a little behind when being clapped on, and being steadily and quickly, yet without sudden effort or violence, brought upwards in front of the bird, is to be placed upon the head, care being taken that the anterior aperture be in a proper position to receive the beak. The left hand, upon which the bird is resting, at the moment of the application of the hood to the head, may be a little depressed in a backward

direction, especially when much resistance is offered by the bird. The hood being placed upon the head, the falconer's next operation is to tighten it, which is to be done by taking one of the braces in his right hand, and another in his teeth, and gently drawing them. Each hood has two braces or ties with four ends, two of which are for tightening, and the other two for slackening it.

Being properly made to the hood, the falcon is next to be *made to the fist*. This is to be done only by a perseverance in carrying and feeding her upon the hand. When confined to the block, she ought to be made to spring thence to the fist of the falconer: and for the accomplishing of this, meat is at first to be held out upon it, to which she is to be invited to come and feed. After two or three lessons, and being seldom allowed to feed except upon the fist, she will shew a readiness to fly to it, even without the sight of meat, provided she be sharp in appetite. It must, however, be observed, that while practising these initiatory lessons, the bird is to be confined to the block by means of the leash or a short creance. The block with the falcon upon it during the day, and when

the weather is fair, is to be kept out of doors; but she must be always taken within at night. When at the block, should hawks appear much inclined to baiting, they ought either to be taken upon the hand and carried about for an hour or two, during which they are to be occasionally hooded and unhooded, or they are to be hooded and left upon the block for a few hours. Indeed, all hawks, whether given to baiting or not, and whether they be intended for immediate flight or not, are the better of being regularly hooded, for at least four or five hours daily—the mewing season or cases of ill-health only excepted. This keeps them both innured to the hood and from breaking their feathers by baiting.

The ground upon which the blocks are to be placed, should be unincumbered and of a smooth surface. A green sward or plot is not only to be preferred, but, if attainable, ought to be provided, either about the house or in a garden or enclosure near by, for weathering the birds upon. But, although it has been observed that hawks ought always to be placed in a situation sheltered from high winds, and secure from molestation, either from

man or beast, it is not necessary that they should be kept excluded from the sight of strangers. On the contrary, their blocks ought not only to be placed in a situation affording a view of persons passing and repassing, but the birds themselves should be carried and unhooded among crowds of people, horses and dogs, in order to embolden them, and to familiarize them with such assemblages; so that when hunting in the fields they may be nothing daunted by the greatest concourse of spectators. Great care, however, must be taken that no strangers or animals be allowed to touch or approach them.

Having advanced thus far in the education of the falcon, she is now to be properly trained to the lure. But here it must be remembered that every hawk, as soon as it begins to fly, ought to be regularly fed upon the lure. Birds or pieces of meat are to be tied on each side of it; and by means of its strap it is to be swung round in the air and thrown to a distance, as the falconer calls her. Sir John Sebright remarks that the hawk, "being first made to come to it when held very near, then when held a little farther off, it is to be

next thrown upon the ground to a small distance; and thus the bird is to be brought by degrees to fly to it, and to seize it eagerly, however far it may be thrown. An assistant is now to swing the lure at some distance from the falconer, who casts off the hawk. It is to be thrown in the air when the hawk is flying towards it, but so that he cannot attain it until it fall to the ground, lest he should be hurt by striking it in his flight."

After this lesson has been repeated a few times, and the falcon shown a readiness to fly at the lure, the assistant, after having lured her from a distance, is suddenly to hide it about his person, by means of which she will pass over his head, and take a turn or two in the air above him. In this situation, then, he is next to throw it from him, uttering at the same time a whoop to encourage her, and attract her attention to it, taking care that at the time it is thrown her head be in a position for seeing it. When she has stooped upon the lure, the falconer is to step slowly forward, and walk round her for a time or two, whistling and talking to her whilst feeding; then take her up upon it, and let her have a good meal. In taking her up, however, no at-

tempt must be made by the falconer to lay hold of her body; he must slowly and steadily extend his hand to the meat or prey while she is upon it, and taking a firm hold of it, lift it up with her still standing upon it, and cautiously secure her by attaching the leash to her jesses. The falconer's voice should always accompany the luring, by calling the bird by any particular name, or hallooing to it. Exercised in this way for a few days, she will soon be brought to wait on, and follow the falconer wherever he pleases; but she must not be kept too long on the wing, lest she should acquire the habit of flying low, it being the perfection of a falcon to soar as high as possible.

The lure, besides being used in training hawks in this manner, is employed likewise for exercising them, when they are not regularly flown at live quarry.

Being now ready for her entry at game, the falcon is to be unhooded, and whistled off the fist, then allowed to mount over the falconer's head; but if inclined to rake, is to be called or lured back, after which a partridge, grouse, or pigeon, that has been provided for the occasion, with a

creance at its foot, is to be unbagged or thrown up to her. When she has struck down this bird, as there is no doubt she will do, if properly managed, she is to be allowed to feed heartily upon it, then hooded up.

This lesson having been repeated with success three or four times, her education may be considered as completed, and she may now be taken into the field and flown at wild game, taking care always to give her every advantage in her first flights.

When young hawks are to be first entered to wild game, the falconer should always carry to the field with him, two or three bagged partridges, or such like quarry, so that in the event of failing in their first attempt, a disappointment to the birds may not take place, (a circumstance which, at the commencement of their career, cannot be too much guarded against), and that they may be encouraged to the sport, by having a quarry in a string, or shortened in its flight, thrown up to them on their return.

It may not perhaps be unnecessary to hint to the tyro, in falconry, that the hawk, before being

cast off, is to be freed of all her trappings except the bells and jesses; (indeed the jesses may often be dispensed with too); also that on the day previous to that upon which she is intended to fly, she is seldom to have more, but sometimes less, than half the usual quantity of food, because if she be not properly sharp in appetite, little sport is to be expected.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRAINING OF HAGGARDS.

The falcon taken in the adult state, after having been accustomed to fly wild, and prey for herself, is more difficult to manage than that procured from the nest. But although there are some considerable differences to be observed in the mode of training them, they are nevertheless, in general points, to be treated nearly the same.

When the falconer commences the tuition of the eyess, his first consideration is to have it in a high

state of body; but with the haggard his first object is to lower her condition in order to reduce her to obedience. The moment she is caught, the rufter hood is to be put on; after which the beak and talons, if long or sharp, are to be coped or blunted by means of a knife or file; the brail is next to be applied, then bells and jesses. Carrying upon the hand must now commence, and be continued during the greater part of the day, for the first three or four days, or until she begin to become tractable. Should she prove very stubborn, she is to be so watched and acted upon during night also. While these means are being used, the falconer is to talk frequently to her, and stroke her occasionally upon the breast and toes with a feather, or the back of his forefinger. The aperture of the hood, being so large as to allow her to see a little, a piece of meat may be occasionally held to her beak, or rubbed upon her feet, to ascertain if she will take any food.

After the second day, and during some time of the following night, the rufter hood is to be taken off in candle light, and meat offered her; but if after a fair trial, she shew no inclination to eat,

she is to be immediately re-hooded, not with the rufter, but with the proper hood, and the process of hooding and unhooding must now commence, and be persevered with in the same manner as with the eyess, until she be properly broke to it. The rufter hood is to be no longer used, being inconvenient for taking off or putting on.

Having been thoroughly brought to stand to the hood, the haggard has next to be made acquainted with the lure; and the best way of attaining this end is by beginning to feed her upon it as soon as she shews the least inclination to feed, and continuing this practice. The mode of training her to it, is exactly the same with that of the eyess, only, during the first few trials, she is to have a long creance attached to her leash. The creance, although seldom required for the eyess, must never be omitted in the initiatory lessons of the haggard or passage-hawk.

When she has shewn a readiness to come to the lure, a pigeon, or such quarry as she is intended to pursue, shortened in the flight, or in a string, is to be thrown out to her, which she is to be permitted to kill and feed upon, then hooded up for

the day. This being repeated three or four times, once a-day, she will be brought to wait on like the eyess; but great care must be taken that she do not rake too far abroad, or be allowed to mount too high, lest she should bear away her bells. The call and lure are to be employed to keep her within due bounds; and she is not to be trusted long upon the wing, until after having gone through successfully her first trials, and become well acquainted with her work. In her first attempt, should she miss her bird, she is to be brought down immediately, with either a live quarry or the lure, and fed upon it for the day.

The falconer is to approach the haggard still more cautiously than he does the eyess, walking slowly round and round her, talking and whistling to her until he gets by her side. When haggards are intended for flying the heron only, it is not requisite that they should be made to wait on.

When hawks will not attack a heron, as at first some are a little shy to do, Sir John Sebright says "they may be generally brought to it by flying them at a cock of a lightish colour, and by tying meat upon a heron's back, and allowing them to

feed there. Small pieces of elder are to be put upon the heron's beak, to prevent him from wounding the hawks in training. The herons are caught by a slip-knot at the end of a long string, so arranged round their nests as to be drawn about their legs when they come upon their eggs. This is best done about sun-set; and the man who is to draw the string is to be placed leeward of the nest. Herons will not feed when they are first taken; it is therefore necessary to cram them with food, and to tie a piece of mat round their necks, to prevent them from throwing it up again."

After hawks have killed two or three in a string, they may be flown at the heron at liberty.

THE MINIKIN FALCONS.

The small falcons, whether procured from the nest or taken in the grown-up state, being to be trained in all essentials according to the course laid down for managing the large falcons, little more on this point is required to be said than to refer the tyro to the instructions given in the preceding part of this and the foregoing chapters.

There are, however, some minor particulars which it may be proper to notice.

All their furniture or apparatus is to be proportionably lighter and smaller than that used for the larger birds; and they may be flown either with or without bells. The lure should be little larger than the bulk of a thrush, but of such weight as to hinder them from flying off with it. They are frequently flown off the fist, but are nevertheless to be taught to wait-on. Indeed, both the hobby and merlin, as soon as they begin to know their work in the field, mount beautifully, and will be upon the wing as long as some of the larger falcons. Their first attempts after being trained should be made at larks, thrushes, sparrows, &c., in the creance; then at snipes and partridges. A cast of them are generally flown together, especially at the lark, snipe, woodcock, and plover.

CHAPTER XIV.

TRAINING OF SHORT-WINGED HAWKS.

THE goshawk and the sparrowhawk are to be trained and managed in the field exactly in the same way. They are to be made to the hood, and taught to come to the hand and lure like the falcons. Although they may be brought to wait on for a short time, that is, make a few turns slowly above the head of the falconer, they are flown chiefly from the hand, and therefore called *hawks of the fist*. After, however, they have been

thoroughly made to the hood, and properly trained, they ought seldom to be hooded, except when wild and refractory, or when they are to be carried to a distance. The bells and jesses are to be put on as soon as they begin to fly, or are entered upon the train.

The resting place of the short-winged hawk is commonly called a perch. Sir John Sebright describes it as being a "pole of about an inch and a half in diameter, fixed horizontally about four feet from the ground. It is to be placed under a tree in fine weather, and in some sheltered place when it rains. To the perch is suspended a piece of cloth or matting, hanging like a curtain, which assists the hawk in regaining the perch when he has bailed off, and prevents him from twisting the leash round it by passing under. The swivel that is fixed to the leash is to be tied close to the top of the perch, and is attached to the jesses by a short leash, six or eight inches long, in such a manner as to be easily taken off when the hawk is to be prepared for flying." But the common block with a piece of round wood of the above mentioned thickness, and of length not more than

will extend across the block with the ends of it sloped off and polished to prevent them entangling the leash, and nailed to the top of it, which is much simpler, will answer, especially with eyesses, equally well.

The short-winged hawk is to be taught to come to the fist by holding out meat upon it; first near hand, then at at a greater distance, which distance is to be increased as the progress of the bird seems to justify.

Its first lessons are to be in the creance, like the other hawks, and, like them also, it is to be carried a good deal on the fist, and managed in every other respect. When its training is completed, and it is ready for entering at the wild game, it is to be carried out into the field either hooded or unhooded, according to its behaviour, and held in readiness to be flown directly off the hand the moment the quarry is put up. The chief difference to be observed in the management of the short-winged from the long-winged hawks, is, the former are never to be cast off until the quarry be put up and in view; the latter are generally cast off, and allowed to mount to a

certain pitch, before the game be sprung. The former, too, are generally to be flown in the highest condition, and in calmer weather.

When the goshawk or any other hawk is to be trained to fly the hare or rabbit, a skin of the animal is to be stuffed and placed erect upon a frame with four wheels, by which, through means of a string, it is to be moved forward in imitation of life; meat is to be attached to the back of this skin, and the bird taught to feed upon it. The hawk having fed a few times upon the effigy, a live hare or rabbit with a string attached to its foot is next to be substituted. After the bird has fed a time or two from meat tied upon the back of the animal also, the latter is to be killed, a little of the skin removed, and the former allowed to feed plentifully upon the warm carcase. This lesson having been twice or thrice repeated, a hare or rabbit without meat in a string, is, last of all, to be turned out, which, the hawk having once seized, is to be immediately killed by the assistance of the falconer, who must here again reward the bird with a warm meal.

These preliminaries having been gone through, the hawk is now ready for the field.

CHAPTER XV.

HERON HAWKING.

THE heron, which, now-a-days, is generally regarded as an intruder upon our streams and ponds, was formerly considered the "first fowl in game." The utmost care was taken to protect and encourage this bird in this country, not only by forming lakes, and rearing and preserving heronries, but special enactments were issued from the Crown, subjecting any person found guilty of killing a heron, without legal permission, to a fine of twenty shillings, which, in those times, was a considerable

sum of money. These means of protection, however, were established, not for the purpose of hawking only, but for the sake of the flesh of the bird likewise, which, like that of the peacock, was then esteemed amongst the foremost dishes of the table.

The most favourable situation for heron hawking is near to a heronry in an open country. "The herons," observes Sir John Sebright, "go out in the morning to rivers and ponds at a considerable distance, in search of food, and return to the heronry towards the evening. It is at this time that the falconers place themselves in the open country down-wind of the heronry, so that when the herons are intercepted on their return home, they are obliged to fly against the wind to gain their place of retreat. When the heron passes, a cast of hawks is let go."

In situations, however, where heronries are not so favourably placed, the falconer has to endeavour to find out some stream or pond where these birds are in the habit of visiting to feed. Their favourite feeding places are generally low marshy grounds, solitary brooks, lakes, and the sea shore.

Having discovered the daily haunt of the heron, the falconer must try to get as near her as possible before he casts off the hawks. This is most successfully done by approaching behind some bank or eminence, if the situation will permit, by which he is screened from her sight. As soon as he has got within a few paces of her, she is to be put up, and the hawks let off. The moment the heron sees the hawks—aware that her life is at stake, and that her speed is ill-calculated to hold out against that of her pursuers—she seeks her escape by mounting in the air, and endeavouring to keep above her enemies. To effect this the more readily, she frees herself of the contents of her stomach and bowels, in order to lighten her weight, and fit her the better for the terrible combat awaiting her.

According to some authors, who seem to take their authority from the "Book of St. Alban's," the heron has a different object in discharging its fæces than that of relieving itself of unnecessary weight: being above, "with his dung he defileth the hawk, and so destroyeth him, for his dung is a poison to the hawk, rotting and putrifying his

feathers;" but such an absurd assertion is unworthy of refuting. The pursuers and pursued mount in spiral gyrations, whose steady upward circlings present to the spectator a most interesting sight, and often the appearance of three birds flying in different directions. The heron, although when flying in a straight forward course her flight is slow, when pursued by the hawk she mounts with great facility. The superior powers of the hawks, however, generally prevail, but often not until they have all three almost disappeared in the sky above the heads of the sportsmen. As soon as one of the hawks gains the ascendancy, a stoop is made at the heron, which should she evade, as she sometimes does, by a shift in her position, another from the other hawk immediately follows, which, however, seldom fails in taking effect; and the two hawks immediately bind or close with their prey, and descend with it perpendicularly to the earth, but not with a dangerous rapidity, as their powers of inflation and the action of their wings break the fall. As soon as the falconer perceives the heron and hawks a little distance from the ground, he is to use all possible haste

to be forward when they first alight, to get hold of the heron's bill to prevent it from wounding the hawks. "It is then," remarks Sir John Sebright, "and not when the heron is in the air, that he will use his beak in his defence. Hawks have indeed sometimes, but very rarely, been hurt by striking against the heron's beak when stooping, but this has been purely accidental, and not (as has been said) by the heron's presenting his beak to his pursuer as a means of defence."

The learned baronet is here, doubtless, labouring under a mistake. Herons in general, tame or wild, the moment they are assailed and deprived of the means to escape, boldly defend themselves with their bill against either man or beast, and not unfrequently with serious results.

Heron hawking should never be practised in windy weather, more especially when the heronry is a great distance off, and that leeward to the bird. When a heron flies downward to the wind, it is seldom taken, and the hawks are in great danger of being lost, the flight being then generally in a straight line, and soon lost sight of. The gerfalcon and passage hawk are the birds generally flown at the heron.

Heron hawking, although little known in this country, retains its original popularity in many other parts of the world. At Loo, for instance, as appears by a paragraph in a paper sent me by a friend, no less than 227 herons were taken during last season. A notice of the sport there appears to have been communicated to the press, through a letter from that place by the Hon. Chas. Stuart Wortley. "The last days," observes the paper, "were extremely favourable for the sport. The concluding sight was peculiarly fine. The falcons marked their game at such an elevation as to be nearly invisible to the sportsmen and spectators, the heron finding it impossible to escape its pursuers descended and fell unharmed amidst the company. Being exhausted by terror and fatigue it was easily secured and marked with the ring N. 121, and when recovered set at liberty from the hand of Lady Stuart Wortley. Two falconers immediately afterwards set out for Norway to catch fresh hawks for next season."

It may indeed be wondered that the English, than whom the people of no nation under the sun, are more capable of appreciating and of enjoying so transcendent a sport, or more highly calculated

to carry it to its utmost perfection, should have so much, and so long lost sight of so exquisitely delightful, so healthful, and so innocent a pastime. A few gentlemen joining together, might have a flight composed of all the different hawks employed in the chase, or of those only of most esteem in it, if desired, whereby they might enjoy all the varieties of hawking alternately upon their respective estates, for a very small sum annually. Gentlemen possessing much open lands, moors, &c., where game becomes so wild as to be quite unapproachable to the gun, would find a flight, kept in this way or upon their own footings, an admirable means of both securing their birds, and increasing their sports.

KITE HAWKING.

The fork-tailed kite *(Falco Milvus)* or bullock, as it is sometimes called, though not unfrequently ranked amongst the birds of the chase, deserves the falconer's consideration rather as a quarry, or bird to be flown at. Lord Orford and Colonel Thornton appear the most conspicuous of our modern falconers, for the practising of this species of

hawking. For this quarry the gerfalcon has been chiefly employed, being considered the only hawk that is fully a match for it. The peregrine falcon, however, has frequently been used with tolerable success, only a cast of them is generally flown together.

The kite is now much rarer in this country than it appears to have been in former times.

It would appear from Clusius, that in the reign of Henry the Eight, the "British metropolis itself swarmed with kites, which were attracted by various kinds of offal thrown into the streets and were so fearless as to take their prey in the midst of the greatest crowds, it being forbidden to molest or kill them." They are said to be still abundant in some parts of England, and Scotland also, and are most commonly seen in open countries. Their flight is commonly high, but they are to be brought down from aloft, to be flown at by the hawks, by means of a live bird acting as a lure. This bird which is to have some weight or string attached to its feet, to retard it flight, is to be let off in sight of the kite, to which the kite immediately descends to prey upon.

The great owl, with the brush of a fox tied to its legs, seems to have been preferred by some falconers to every other bird, for this purpose; but the common white owl, which is more easily procured, answers nearly as well. Indeed a domestic fowl, of a conspicuous colour, or a pigeon, shortened in its flight, is thought to make a very good substitute for either. As soon as the kite has descended to this bird or to within a short distance of it, the hawk, being held in readiness is to be immediately let off. At sight of the hawk the kite, like the heron, takes directly aloft, followed by his antagonist, and a terrible combat ensues. They will sometimes go entirely out of sight in the air above, and remain so for minutes. At length they again return to view. Still the combat is not over, although victory by this time, is commonly fast declaring itself, for the hawk, which bird may now be seen stooping, canceliering, and beating down the fugitive. Nothing within the whole sphere of sports, can present a more interesting sight, than the two combatants do at this stage of the chase; the one upon a most determined attack, the other upon a desperate defence.

The kite being, however, vanquished or brought to the ground, the falconer is to lose no time in getting forward and securing it lest the hawk in struggling with it should receive some hurt, or damage his feathers.

CHAPTER XVI.

PHEASANT HAWKING.

As pheasants are generally found near woods or in covers, they require a different mode of hawking from that commonly pursued with birds frequenting the open country. The goshawk is considered the most suitable of all hawks for this sport, being best adapted for bush-hawking. But whenever pheasants are found a little distance from the cover, the gerfalcon or peregrine falcon is to be preferred. The goshawk is to be flown, most

successfully, after the leaves have fallen off the trees, because it can then see the better to follow the quarry through the thickets. As soon as the dogs have found a pheasant, the goshawk, being held in readiness, is to be let off the moment it is put up; and if she has succeeded in taking it, the dogs being carefully kept back, the falconer, whistling and talking kindly to her, approaches; and if she be intended for another flight, rewards her with two or three morcels of meat either from his pocket, or from the head and neck of the pheasant; but if she be not intended for another flight, he is to feed her up for the day.

The falconer, before he goes out to fly his hawks, should always provide himself with as much fresh meat as each bird usually eats, or some birds to kill or newly killed, in a bag, so that in the event of no quarry being taken, the hawks be not disappointed of their food.

When the peregrine falcon or gerfalcon is to be employed in pheasant hawking, it may be flown either off the fist, or *out of the hood*, as it is technically called, at the springing of the game; or cast off, and allowed to mount, before the quarry

be put up. When the pheasant sees the hawk upon the wing, it is so seized with terror, that rather than hazard its life in a flight, it will often suffer the dogs or men to lay hold of it. When the pheasants are out feeding, the falconer's first object must be, to get between them and their cover. This done, he may next either cast off a falcon, and allow it to soar about for a minute or two, in order to make them lie until the dogs find them; or unhood the falcon, and hold her upon the fist by the jesses, as he advances towards them, that she may be ready to take after the first that rises.

The falcon makes a beautiful stoop at the pheasant, seldom missing her object, and bringing it to the ground, usually with one stroke.

MOOR-FOWL & PARTRIDGE HAWKING.

Of all kinds of hawking, that of red and black grouse is entitled to the foremost place. Not only from the laudable consideration that profit as well as pleasure has an equal share in the sport; but,

because from the nature and habits of the birds, together with the open situations they inhabit, hawking here can be practised in its highest perfection. Although partridge hawking may in general afford excellent sport, independent of the enclosed character of the country partridges commonly resort to, still these birds want that boldness of flight, which in the other, brings the powers of the hawk more beautifully into play.

On entering the field, whether that of moor-game or partridge, should the birds be found so wild as not to lie to the dogs, a hawk is to be put upon the wing, and the falconer is to take a gallop over the ground with her soaring above his head, which will have a considerable effect in curing them of their wildness, then take her down either by the lure or a bird put up to her, and commence with the dogs to regularly hunt over the field.* If, after the falcon has been taken down the birds still continue wild, as they sometimes do when collected

* The hawk may be employed in concert with the gun in the same manner. When the birds will not lie to the sportsman, by having a trained falcon to be cast off and allowed to mount or soar over the ground for a few minutes, then taken down, the most successful shooting may follow.

into large flocks, the sportsman, mounted on horseback, must have recourse to marking them in, and following to them, with the hawk waiting on in the air. There is another method equally deserving of the falconer's attention, recommended by Sebright, for birds when too wild, which is, the sportsmen are to be drawn up in a line at the distance of fifty or sixty yards from each other, and gallop across the ground, with the hawk upon the wing, the falconer keeping about the centre, that he may regulate the pace by the situation of the hawk. Excellent sport has been obtained by this method.

When the game does not appear shy, as soon as the dogs have given point, the hawk is to be unhooded, and a small morsel of meat may be either given to her or not. Then she is to be whistled off the hand, and allowed to mount, the falconer taking care that she do not rake too far abroad, by calling, or as occasion requires, luring her; this last remedy, however, must be used with discretion, as much luring prevents hawks from mounting to a proper pitch.

Having got the hawk in a proper position, with

her head turned inwards, to command a view of the dogs, the falconer is to spring the game, and the stoop of the bird will immediately follow. It matters not, provided the hawk has attained a proper height, though she should be a considerable distance from the quarry when first put up. A bird being struck down, the falconer gently approaches it, (the hawk being upon it of course), but as has been observed, not in a straight line, but by walking round and round the hawk, nearing her more and more at each circuit, until he get close to her. Having got by her side, he is to kneel down, and slowly extending his arm towards her (with a morsel of meat in his hand, should the bird appear shy,) to secure the prey. She is now to be either encouraged with a morsel or two of the head and neck of the warm bird, then hooded up for another flight, or is to be fed immediately. While the falconer is thus engaged, neither the sportsmen nor dogs must press forward; but, on the contrary, remain a few paces off, until the bird be replaced upon the fist.

Should the hawk, however, have missed the quarry, and it have taken refuge in some bush or

hedge, she will most probably make her point, keep hovering for a short while over the spot; at sight of which, the falconer and sportsmen must hasten forward, and lose no time in driving out the game; but if it cannot be immediately driven out, either a bagged bird with a string at its foot, or the lure, must be thrown out to the hawk to bring her down.

Young hawks, at their second or third flights, should always be allowed to feed upon the game as soon as they have killed it; and when they have put in the quarry, if it cannot be immediately retrieved, a live bird, of the same kind, if at all convenient, is to be thrown up to them to feed upon. The number of flights at moorfowl or partridges, in a day, for each hawk, is commonly about half a dozen; but recently trained birds, for the first three or four attempts in the field, should not be allowed more than two or three.—Staunch and high ranging pointers are the best dogs for this kind of hawking, but they must be under great command, and as much as possible accustomed to the hawks.

BROOK HAWKING.

The hawking, at all kinds of water-fowl, whether found in brooks, ponds, lakes, marshes, rivers, or sea-shores, goes under the general name of brook-hawking.

The falcons are chiefly employed in this sport; and they may be either cast off before the quarry be put up, or after it. When the hawk is upon the soar, aquatic birds are difficult to put up, being then afraid to trust themselves upon the wing; consequently good water-dogs must be employed, either to force them aloft or catch them in the water. Should a bird be struck down into the water by the hawk, and not picked up and brought ashore by her, a dog is to be sent in for it, but on being brought to land it must immediately be taken from the dog and thrown up to the hawk, that she may deplume it for a short time, and taste its warm flesh.

ROOK AND MAGPIE HAWKING.

The rook being strong in wing, and wary in its

flight, shifting and wheeling about in the air, and sometimes rising almost perpendicularly aloft, like the heron, affords often both good sport and great play to the hawk. Rook hawking, however, is to be practised with success only where the country is open and free of wood. A cast of hawks is commonly flown at a time, and the rook, if the weather be at all windy, ought to be situated leeward to the nearest rookery, so that it may be obliged to fly to its place of retreat against the wind.

1st. The corby or flesh crow is to be taken in the same manner. This solitary inhabitant of our woods, which of all our birds of prey, is doubtless the most destructive to game, poultry, &c., may be kept in check, or prevented from becoming too abundant in the landlord's domain, affording excellent pastime to the sportsmen, by hunting him down with the hawk. In some parts of Scotland, I am informed, hawks are kept for the express purpose of killing these and other destructive vermin.

2d. Magpie hawking which seems to have been a favourite sport with some falconers, differs considerably from rook hawking. The magpie is ill adapted for either a speedy or long flight, but as

an equivalency for any defects on this score, she is amply endowed with cunning, which she commonly contrives to turn to the best account. An open situation, interspersed with low trees, or slender bushes, thirty or forty yards apart, makes the best field for this sport; but where this is not to be found, common hedgerows, if not very thick, make a tolerable substitute.

The falconer must endeavour to get in betwen the magpie and the nearest wood or clump of trees, before he commences the sport. As soon as he has seen her at a distance, a hawk is to be cast off, at sight of which she will take refuge in the first tree or bush that offers shelter, and remain until the sportsmen arrive, with the hawk waiting on in the air.

She is now to be driven from her retreat, by the cracking of the sportsmens' whips, and other means, but seldom until another hawk has been cast off, for this sport commonly requires two hawks, one to back the other in the stooping. Being forced out, she will either be struck down by one of the hawks, or escape to the next bush, eluding the stoops with great dexterity and art. The

sportsmen, it may be observed, must all take an active part in this sport, and as soon as the magpie has taken to the bush, they must immediately beset it on every side, to again drive her out. The stratagem of the magpie amongst the bushes and the movement of the hawks in the air, cause great diversion to the sportsmen.

FUR HAWKING.

In foreign countries, where foxes, wolves, wild boars, stags, &c., are hunted down by eagles and large hawks, fur hawking may be said to be of very extensive interest; but in Britain, where a solitary hare or rabbit constitute almost the whole of the quadrupedal quarry—and even these seldom flown at—it holds a place of very limited importance.

When the hare or rabbit is to be flown at by the hawk, it is to be put up, and the hawk to have a proper sight of it before the falconer casts her off. The moment the hawk gets a glance of the prey, being let off, she flies commonly in a direct line to it, and with a rapid sweep sometimes carries her heel along the spine of the animal, some-

times strikes it upon the back part of the skull, and at other times binds or grapples with it. The goshawk seldom rises in her flight at the hare or rabbit, and commonly binds immediately after the first stroke, particularly if young and inexperienced. The falcon, however, generally elevates her flight a little before she deals the blow; and as soon as her first stoop has been made, she rises like lightning again to her position, as if to watch its effects; then a second stoop follows, and sometimes a third, or even a fourth. After the first stoop the hare is commonly seen to stagger considerably, and the second generally stops its career. Indeed, there have been frequent instances where the falcon has split the skull of the hare at its first stroke. As soon as she has been struck down, the falconer must hasten forward to the bird's assistance, in order that she may have to struggle as little as possible to hurt herself or her feathers. One, two, or three successful flights at a hare are usually considered a sufficient day's work for a hawk; and she is always to be rewarded with a little of the warm brains, or flesh of the prey, as soon as the falconer gets forward.

The gerfalcon and goshawk are the birds most commonly employed in fur hawking in this country. Although the peregrine falcon has been used with tolerable success, it is rather light for the hare; but whenever intended for this sport, a cast must always be flown at a time.

Hawks in general fly best when kept to a certain kind of quarry; but those particularly which have been trained for flying hares and rabbits should never be flown at birds.

Hawks, however, that have been accustomed to a certain sort of quarry, may be made to take to any other kind, by being fed a time or two upon the strange game. Some falconers fly their hawks three times a-week: others oftener. Eyesses, especially in their first season, can scarcely have too much exercise, and may be flown almost every day. Plenty of work not only perfects their strength, but teaches young falcons the proper art of taking the quarry by mounting.

CHAPTER XVII.

FEEDING OF HAWKS.

The appetite of the hawk is considered to be the bridle that restrains him, and the spur that urges him to exertion; and it is upon the proper management of this *primum mobile* that the success of the falconer must principally depend. The falconer's success in the field being then entirely dependent upon the condition of his hawk—so this condition rests almost wholly upon the feeding of him.

The common food of the hawk, as has already been observed, consists chiefly of fresh beef, freed

of all fat, skin, &c.; the nestling, then, is to be fed regularly twice a day, at certain hours, until properly summed. In feeding hawks twice a day, however, there is one very important point to be attended to, viz., the morning meal should contain as little castings as possible; because when then taken, they are seldom ejected before the birds receive their evening meals; the consequence of which is, the fresh meat received into the stomach upon the impure and undigested matter, which the castings contain, must be either thrown up, before its nutritious qualities be properly taken up by the absorbents, or it must cause a detention of an obnoxious substance in the stomach, which has the effect of taking away the appetite and deranging every function connected with it. The castings, then, ought always to be given with the evening meal, and the birds on the following morning should never be fed until they have disgorged them, which the falconer ought always to look for and examine; for it is by the appearance of these and the mutes, chiefly, that he is to judge of the state of the stomach and bowels of the birds. Nor must hawks ever be taken out to fly until they have

thrown their pellets, which they commonly do early in the morning.

When young hawks arrive at the stage of hack-hawks, and properly summed, they should be fed only once a day, for hawks never feed so well—that is make so good a meal—and are never kept in so good condition when oftener fed.

Before concluding the present notice upon the feeding of hawks, it may not be improper to add a word or two respecting the old practice of washing their food. In some of Sir Walter Scott's works, "The Abbot," for one, the utility of this custom forms among his falconers, the subject of much warm dispute. Indeed, when we take a view of the natural habits of the bird, feeding often upon animals with the blood streaming from them, bathing his beak daily in this "crimson torrent," and even drinking it as it issues warm from their veins—for hawks invariably taste the blood before they eat much of their prey—the propriety of such a custom would appear very questionable. Nor does it appear less so when it has been remembered that our beef and mutton, being commonly well bled by the knife of the butcher before

we see it, must possess less blood when given to the hawk than does its common prey, which, as it is termed, dies in the blood.

With all this against it, however, the practice has been long in use, and strongly advocated. Nor have its advocates, heading their cause, a meaner authority than the illustrious huntress, Juliana Berners, prioress of Sopewell Nunnery, of the fifteenth century. This learned and heroic authoress, who, as it has elsewhere been observed, wrote a work upon falconry, called the Book of St. Alban's, holds the washing to be a "special dutie of a fauconer," the omission of which she says "engrosseth the blood of a hawk," and unfits him for sport. In the following century, amongst Markham, Tankerville, Bert, and their cotemporaries, besides subsequent writers, this practice appears still to be strongly recommended, but not without having to contend with opinions equally opposed to it. The "Great Unknown," no doubt, has taken the original of his hawking characters' disputes from the discussions of these old authors respecting the washing of meat. As regards, however, my own opinion of the practice, it is my conviction

that under certain circumstances it is of unquestionable utility, but under others, it is as certainly improper. Wherever mutton or beef appears not to have been properly bled, or smeared with clotted blood; or whenever it has become stale, hard, or clammy, it ought to be washed in pure or spring water; but wherever it is fresh and well bled, as it commonly comes from the shambles, it ought, on the contrary, not to be washed.

In feeding hawks, it is necessary, as soon as the birds have been served, to remove from them any bones or fragments of meat which they may have left; because if such be permitted to remain about their perches, especially in hot weather, it has not only the effect of sickening their appetites, but of generating an unwholesome or putrid exhalation around them. To have them in health it is necessary that they be kept in pure air, and perfectly clean in themselves. Their feet ought to be frequently washed, and the best manner of doing it is by means of a common tooth-brush dipped in cold water. Their mutes likewise should be daily swept away from around their blocks.

It matters little upon what hour of the day they

be fed, provided the falconer be punctual to that hour. As soon, however, as they have been taken up for training, their meal is to be given them always at the conclusion of their lessons, which ought to take place towards the evening.

Eyesses are generally allowed as much meat at a time as they will take, because they may be flown in high condition; but not so the haggards; these birds, being more apt to bear away the bells, require to be kept in rather a low state. Haggards, however, like the eyesses, must have a full gorge every fourth or fifth day; that is, as much food as they will take. The gorge should always be upon a warm bird, and taken with castings. The quantity of beef, for each hawk, must vary according to the size and condition of the bird. Between three and four ounces is about the modicum, or average portion, for the peregrine falcon. Her food, however, during the flying season, ought to consist as much as possible of birds, because much beef then is apt to make her indolent.

In order to judge properly of the condition of a hawk, the falconer should daily accustom himself to feel its thighs, and breast on each side of the

breast-bone; when firm and round to the touch, the bird is in good order, but when flat and tendinous, in too low condition; when full and soft in too high condition. The too low state is to be remedied by increasing the allowance of food, adding, occasionally, a little egg to it; and the too high is to be reduced by means of lessening the quantity of food, for three or four days, and giving the bird plenty of castings every day.

Some hawks fly best in high condition, and others when they are somewhat lower. When, therefore, it has been ascertained in what state any particular hawk flies best, its food should be regulated accordingly; but it must always be borne in mind that it is better that a hawk be rather above than below flying trim. The state of the stomach is to be ascertained as has been observed by examining the pellets, or castings, after being disgorged. When the process of digestion is properly performed, the castings have the appearance of a hard, dry, oblong ball, and the mutes almost purely white; but when the stomach is out of order, the ball has a pulpy tenacious appearance, consisting of mucous and particles of

indigested food; and the mutes are of a glary green colour. Warm birds with plenty of feathers in this case is the best remedy, but when these cannot be procured, feathers with beef or a warm sheep's heart must be daily given.

BATHING OF HAWKS.

In hot weather hawks should be bathed at least twice a week, even thrice is not too often; but in cold and winter weather, and when the birds are in the moult, once a week is sufficient. Sir John Sebright, to whose practice references have been so often made in this work, recommends a clear stream or pool for this purpose; but a proper vessel containing pure water is to be preferred. Hawks accustomed to bathe in pools or streams when out hawking are apt, especially in hot weather, to sit down for this purpose in the first place of the kind they come to, and remain until they have thoroughly drenched themselves, which spoils them for the day's sport.

Hawks should never be bathed with an empty stomach, neither with a full crop, but should have

received a very moderate meal shortly before being taken to the bath; and the day previous to that upon which they are intended to be flown, being always then sparingly fed, should be selected for this purpose. Hawks, however, that are flown every day are, of course, excepted here, but they are to have their bath every other day or so, after returning from the field. The bathing vessel, filled with water, ought to be placed at a short distance from the place where the hawks commonly sit, and each bird separately is to be carried upon the falconer's left hand, with its block in his right, and set down close to it. As some hawks do not bathe freely in presence of any person, it is sometimes requisite on the part of the falconer to retire to a distance, or out of their sight, until they have properly washed. As soon as a bird has satisfied itself with the water, it will leap on to the block, and if it show no inclination to return to take another dip, it and block, carried as before, are to be immediately taken back to their proper place. In cold or damp and cloudy weather, when hawks come out of the bath, they ought to be taken to within a short distance of a fire, and either set

down or held upon the falconer's hand until they be properly dried. In drying and pluming themselves, however, in this situation, it is necessary that the falconer keep an attentive eye towards them, lest they should bait, or attempt to fly and break their feathers.

MEWING OF HAWKS.

Much unnecessary labour, expense, and verbosity, by falconers, have commonly been expended upon the mewing of hawks. It is a process, however, attended with neither much of trouble nor expense. All that is required is to place the birds in a room free of rain, damp, and impure air, either confined to the blocks or at liberty, keeping the place perfectly clean, and giving them as much beef, with a little egg beaten up in it, as they will take. They are to have castings, and a bath once a-week. Should the weather be very cold, the chill may be taken off the water; but it must not be made warm. Indeed this may be done during the winter months, in bathing hawks of full plumage. When the weather is mild the birds

may be put out of doors during the height of the day; especially if they be not in a very denuded state. Their food should, occasionally, be changed to a warm bird or a sheep's heart. The hood is never to be put on during the mewing season.

Hawks, before being taken in for moulting, should be carefully examined whether they have any vermin upon them; if any be found, they must be removed by blowing the fumes of tobacco or sulphur through amongst the roots of the feathers, by means of a blow-pipe. Sulphur finely powdered, applied in the same way has also been recommended, but the tobacco fume has been considered not only the more successful, but safer remedy.

IMPING AND COPING.

When any of the wing or tail feathers of a hawk get broken, as such an accident mars the speed of the bird, it is necessary to repair them by an expedient called *imping*. Sir John Sebright well describes this operation—"This curious process consists in attaching to the part that remains an exact substitute for the piece lost. For

this purpose, the falconer ought always to be provided with pinions, right and left, and with tail feathers of hawks, or with the feathers separated from the pinions, carefully preserved and numbered, so as to prevent mistake in taking a true match for an injured feather. He then with a sharp knife gently parts the feather to be repaired, at its thickest part, and cuts the shaft obliquely forward, so as not to damage the web on the opposite edge. He next cuts the substitute feather as exactly as possible at the corresponding point, and with the same degree of slope. For the purpose of uniting them, he is to be provided with an iron needle, with broad triangular points at both ends; and after wetting the needle with salt and water, he thrusts it into the centre of the pit of each part, as truly straight, and as nearly to the same length in each, as may be. When this operation has been skilfully performed, the junction is so neat that an unexperienced eye would hardly discern the point of union; and, as the iron rusts, from having been wetted with brine, there is little or no danger of separation."

COPING.

When the beak and talons of the hawk have grown to such a length as to interfere with the process of swallowing, or so unusually sharp as to wound the hand of the falconer, it is necessary to have these obviated by paring and shortening them. This operation is termed *coping*.

Formerly certain instruments, called *coping-irons*, were used for this purpose, but a common pocket-knife, with the assistance of a file, is all that is required.

The hawk, being hooded, is to be placed in the hands of an assistant, and the falconer is to take a sharp knife and gently remove a small portion of the beak, taking great care that the instrument does not go so deep as to enter the sensitive parts, and also that the original form of the beak be preserved.

WEATHERING HAWKS.

In order to preserve the health of hawks in a

confined state, it is necessary that they should be kept as much out of doors, during the day, as the weather and other circumstances will allow. This sitting in the open air is termed *weathering*—haggards, having been accustomed to live in the open air for a length of time, require weathering more particularly. Hawks, in general, are weathered without their hoods; but some are so inclined to baiting, that hooding must be had recourse to. Latham recommends all hawks to be weathered in their hoods; but this is evidently an erroneous idea on the part of that author: for, as regards the powers of vision, and proper health of the birds, they cannot be too little hooded. Haggards, when much given to struggling, may, instead of being weathered upon the block, be placed upon green hillocks, or on the level sward, with the leash attached to a small peg, driven sufficiently into the earth as to secure the birds, and prevent them breaking their feathers against it. A few mouthfuls of meat, or a fleshless pinion given to them, will sometimes allay the desire for baiting.

DISTEMPERS OF HAWKS.

Hawks, like all other animals, are subject to certain distempers. These, in former times, with their remedies, appear to have been almost innumerable; in latter days, however, only two or three of the most important are deemed worthy of notice.

It has already been observed that they are liable to become affected with insects externally; they are also, at times, apt to be troubled with *worms* internally. In such cases, a grain of calomel with two of aloes, given rolled up in a morsel of beef, makes a very efficient vermifuge; four grains of finely levigated glass, two of salt, and three of sulphur, mixed together, and given two or three times, is also allowed to be a good remedy.

Asthma is a complaint incident to hawks. It discovers itself by the bird wheezing, panting, and a hoarseness, or defect in squealing. For this, at first, the diet is to be reduced, and a purgative or two of aloes or jalap, in three or four grains, must be administered—a daily dose of a grain of antimonial powder, given in a teaspoonful of honey of roses, appears to have been employed with success in this disease.

Frounce is another distemper to which hawks are subject. The symptoms indicative of this disorder, are a lustreless aqueous eye, a whitish tongue and roof of the mouth with darkish blotches, a discharge of liquid from the nares, and an accumulation of spittle at the commissure or opening of the mouth; the mutes are of a green or greyish colour, and frequently contain a substance resembling drops of recently melted tallow. In this case, three or four grains of rhubarb or aloes, in the centre of small pieces of meat, may be occasionally given.

In treating the distempers here enumerated, should the means specified prove unsuccessful, the hawk, before the disorder is allowed to advance too far, ought to be turned out to hack; which may be styled the sovereign remedy in all diseases.

MARKS FOR JUDGING A GOOD HAWK—AND PROPERTIES OF A GOOD FALCONER.

Amongst hawks, as amongst all other animals, there are to be found considerable differences in

their physical powers or qualities. Like the human race, they are not all alike endowed by nature; and like them, too, their external features often become a true index of their inherent properties. The worth of the horse is to be judged of from his physical development; in like manner the qualities of the hawk are to be estimated according to its corporeal proportions. The marks considered to denote excellence in a hawk (of the falcon order) are a deeply round and broad breast, broad over the back and scapular region, with the pinion joint born high up and forward upon the shoulder; narrow over the pelvic region (Blome is wrong when he says hawks should "carry their breadth down to their train") with the wings well crossing each other, short and well proportioned arms standing widely apart, with a large foot, the head small and carried erect, with a short compact neck, the eyes large, full, and black, the beak short, and well curved with large nares. Hawks thus constituted may be detected from all others, even in the air, through a peculiarity in their mode of flight.

Certain habitates, or geographical situations,

it would appear, have considerable influence upon the qualities of hawks. Norway, for instance, has long been celebrated for its superior birds of the chase; but whether this alleged superiority over those of other countries, be not like that of Newcastle salmon upon our eastern coast, in modern days, whether it be not "more in the name than aught substantial," would appear rather questionable. It is a point, however, upon which personal experience does not carry me so far as to form a warrantable opinion. Col. Thornton, whose views, as a practical falconer, are ever entitled to the greatest respect, seems to carry this notion of local virtue, if I may so term it, still farther, for he asserts, that he could never obtain a tiercel that would fly ducks, but from Hambledon, in Yorkshire, although he tried many others.

Having said thus much upon what is believed to indicate, or constitute a good hawk, perhaps it may not be amiss to add a word or two upon the qualifications of a good falconer. Bert's opinion upon this important personage—for falconers have always been remarkable for their importance, especially when in company with novices of the

lure—is well worthy of notice :—"To make a complete falconer," he remarks, "requires an able body, a quick spirit, and most of all an earnest love and delight thereunto ; to such a man a hawk will quickly teach wisdom, but of him that wanteth wit she will make a fool, and of a dull spirit a true pack-horse." But what, perhaps, may more properly be considered the dominant properties, are, a quick eye, a commandable temper, a patient mind, an unremitting love for the birds, to which may be added an active frame, a speedy foot, a good horseman and bold rider. An old author, but who I do not know, makes the following racy observations upon falconers :—"Their bee persons who saith much off their lov for hakes, likwis concerning delectibil plesures of sportes thairof, moreovir much desireth hakes and sportes, yet bestireth thaimselfs not off thair settils to command thaim, but remaineth thairon sorrofulie, as if peradventur the birdis of heavin would of freewill com to thair homs without servis (trouble) ; thair bee othir persones who gottin hakes lovith and servith thaim throughout a shortt tyme, but so lacketh spirrit and constancie that they neglecteth thaim,

whereby they spoylyth thaim, which maketh the birdes dyspise and forsake thair masters. It behooveth not sic persones to bee austringers to kytes or castralls, for they bee marhaws and hakeslayors."

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TERMS

IN

FALCONRY.

Arms. The legs of the hawk.
Austringer. A falconer.
Bate. To flutter off the fist or block.
Beak. The bill.
Beams. The long feathers of the wings.
Bells. Bells attached to the legs of the hawk.
Bells. To bear away the bells; to fly away and not return.
Bewits. The small slips of leather that attach the bells to the legs.
Bind. To fix or close upon the quarry.
Block. A piece of wood for the hawk to sit upon.
Brails. Thongs of leather with a slit, through which the pinion is passed.

Cadge or *Cage.* The frame upon which the hawks are carried.
Cancelier. To make a few turns after the stoop has been made, in order to recover from the force of flight.
Carry. To fly away with the quarry when taken.
Cast. A couple or pair of hawks.
Cast. To cast a hawk; to lay it upon its back.
Cast. To cast off; to put the hawk on wing.
Castings. Feathers, tow, or cotton, given amongst the hawk's food; pellets of feathers, &c. ejected from the stomach.

Cawking. Treading.
Cere. The yellow part betwixt the beak and eyes.
Check. To check; to forsake the proper quarry, and take after another bird.
Check. The check; a bird crossing the flight of the hawk
Clap. The under mandible.
Coping. Paring the beak and talons with aknife.
Cowering. Quivering and shaking the wings in obedience.
Crabbing. Struggling and fighting with each other.
Craw. The crop or gorge.
Creance. A long string or thread attached to the "leash," used in training the hawk.

Drawer or *Drawing.* The feathers upon the "lure."
Dropping. The dung when it falls in drops.

Endew. To disgorge or cleanse the craw or stomach.
Enter. To enter a young hawk the first time at the quarry.
Enseame. To purge the hawk of its grease.
Eyess, Eyass, or *Nyass.* A young hawk taken from the nest.

Falconer. The person that takes charge of, or manages hawks.
Feak. To wipe the beak.
Flags. The long feathers of the wings next to the principal feathers.
Fly at Fur. To pursue hares, rabbits, &c.
Fly on Head. When the hawk has missed his quarry, and taken to the next bird or "check," it is said to "fly on head."
Fly out of the Hood. To let off the hawk the moment the game rises.

Gorge. The crop or stomach; to gorge, to satiate.

Hack. At liberty; hence "hack-hawk," a hawk living at liberty.
Hack-Bells. Leaden or weighty bells used upon hawks at hack.
Haggard. A hawk captured in a matured and wild state.
Hood. A cap or cover for the head of the hawk.
Hood-Rufter or *Rufter-Hood.* The hood used when the hawk is first captured or taken up for training.

Imping. Mending a broken feather.
Inke. The neck of a bird upon which the hawk has preyed.
Intermieved. Having gone through the first moult.

Jesses. The short leathern slips attached to the hawk's legs, to which the "leash" is fastened.
Jouk. To sleep.

Lantiner. A young hawk taken shortly after leaving the nest, and before Lent-time.
Leash or *Lease.* A thong of leather by which the hawk is bound to the fist or block.
Lure. A piece of iron of peculiar form, and covered with leather, to which the wings or feathers of birds are attached.
Lure. To entice the hawk by waving the "lure."

Mails. The breast feathers.
Make-Hawk. An old experienced hawk, by means of which young ones are taught.
Manning a Hawk. Bringing it to endure company.
Mantle. To stretch out one wing and foot.
Marr-Hawe or *Marr-Hawk.* A bad falconer; one who spoils hawks.
Mayling. The thrusting of the hawk into a narrow bag, shaped somewhat like a stocking, to prevent the bird from struggling, a practice similar to "brailing." "Trussing" is also used in this sense.
Mew. To moult.
Mews. The place where hawks are mewed or kept.
Mounty or *Mountee.* The hawk's ascending in the air.
Mutes. Dung.

Nares. Nostrils.
Nestling. A young hawk taken from the nest.
Nyesse. A nestling; the same as *Eyess.*

Pannel. The rectum.
Pantais or *Pantas.* The panting of the hawk.
Pelf. What the hawk leaves of its prey after having fed.

Pendant feathers. Those overhanging the thighs.
Perch. The resting place of the short-winged hawk.
Petty singles. The toes of the hawk.
Pill. Synonymous with *Pelf.*
Plume. To preen,—to pick and adjust the feathers.
Plume. Birds; hence "to fly at plume," is the field phrase for "to fly at birds."
Plume or *Deplume.* To pluck off the feathers.
Plumage. Feathers for castings.
Pounces. The claws or talons.
Principal feathers. The two longest feathers of the wing.
Put in. The quarry is *put in* when, being pursued, it takes to cover.

Quarry. The object at which the hawk is flown.

Rake. To fly or range too far from the falconer.
Rammish. Stubborn, wild, unmanageable.
Rangle. To give a hawk rangle is to give it gravel or small stones.
Reclaim. To tame or reduce the hawk from its native wildness to a docile state.
Rouse. The hawk rouses when it shakes itself.
Ruff or *Rifle.* To strike, without securing or bringing down the quarry.

Sails. The wings of the hawk.
Sealing or *Seeling.* Closing and binding the eyes, by drawing a thread through the eyelids,—a practice not now in use.
Slice. To discharge the dung with a yerk.
Slime. To drop the dung without a yerk.
Sniting. Sneezing.
Soar. To mount in the air.
Soar feathers. Nestling feathers.
Soary. The mounting or *mounty* of the hawk.
Stoop or *Swoop.* The hawk's descent at its prey.
Summed. When the feathers are fully grown.
Strike. To pounce upon or strike the quarry with the talons.
Strike the hood. To draw the strings, or tighten.

Tackler. A hawk flying at hack ; a *hack hawk.*
Tiring. To give the hawk *tiring*, is to give it a fleshless pinion, or bone, to pull at.
Train. The tail of the hawk.
Truss. To catch or grasp the bird in the air, without striking it to the ground.

Unstrike. To slacken the string of the hood.
Unsummed. Imperfectly or not fully feathered.

Vaulting pole. A pole formerly carried by the falconer, by which he vaulted or leaped over ditches.

Waiting-on. To soar above the head of the falconer until he spring the game.
Warble. To cross the wings together over the back in stretching.
Weather. To weather a hawk is to accustom it to sit unhooded upon a block in the open air.
Whistle-off. To whistle to the hawk when being cast off.
Yerk. To mute with a spring backward.

Falconers of old used to give different names to hawks, according to the periods of the year in which they were taken : they also gave the hawks distinctive names according to their age ; thus :—

Nestling, or Eyesse. When taken from the nest.
Brancher, or Ramage Hawk. When taken from the branches, or perches near the nest, before beginning to prey for itself in the month of June, July, and August.
Soar Hawk. When taken between September, October, and November.
Murzarlet, or Carry-fist. When taken between January and May ; it is said to require very frequent *carrying on the fist* to reclaim it, owing to the season in which it is captured ; hence the name *carry-fist.*
Soarage. When taken before it has cast its nestling or soar feathers ;—a hawk of the first year ; termed also *red-hawk.*

Intermew, or Intervew. When taken between May and December, during which period its feathers are constantly dropping off.
Red Hawk. A hawk of the second year.
White Hawk. One of the third year.
Hawk of the First Coat. One of the fourth year.
Hawk of the Fist. One that flies direct off the fist at its game without mounting or waiting-on.
Hawk of the Soar. One that mounts in the air, and waits-on until the game be put up.
Hawk of the Lure. Every species of the hawk may be termed a *hawk of the lure*, as all may be taught to feed upon, and obey it.

The subjoined are special names given to the males of various species :—

Iron. The male of the eagle.
Jerkin. The male of the gerfalcon.
Tiercel or Tercelet. The male of the peregrine falcon, as also that of the goshawk.
Sackerel. The male of the sacker.
Lanneret. The male of the lanner.
Robin. The male of the hobby.
Jack. The male of the merlin.
Musket. The male of the sparrow-hawk.
Kestrilet. The male of the kestril.
King. The male of the raven.

A number of other terms in falconry, furnished by old authors, might be inserted here, but their meaning and utility appearing very doubtful, I have deemed it better to omit them.